

*DANTE*  
*THE DIVINE COMEDY*  
*PURGATORIO AND PARADISO*

A COMMENTARY  
BY  
DENTON J. SNIDER



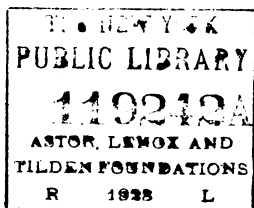
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# CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
<b>PURGATORIO —</b>	
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	5-94
PRE-PURGATORY . . . . .	95
MID-PURGATORY . . . . .	164
POST-PURGATORY . . . . .	337
<b>PARADISO —</b>	
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	383
LOWER HEAVEN . . . . .	423
MIDDLE HEAVEN . . . . .	484
UPPER HEAVEN . . . . .	527
TOTAL HEAVEN . . . . .	567

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE PURGATORIO.

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### THE IDEA OF PURGATORY.

Already in the first portion of the present work on Dante we have designated the great mythical organism, of which the *Divine Comedy* is the mightiest outgrowth, as the Mythus of the Apocalypse, or the Uncovering of the Future State. Of this Mythus one chief phase has been shown, the Inferno, which is damnation, dark, terrible, disastrous, the tragedy of the human race. But the soul, the self-mastering principle, cannot rest with such an outcome of its destiny; there must be some rescue even of the fallen; accordingly, the mythical spirit of man proceeds to work out the process of recovery from transgression, and to embody the same in a fable for the imagination and the heart of the people. Such is the primordial impulse which creates a realm of puri-

fication, and becomes a great fountain-head not only of Religion, but, also, of Art, Literature, and especially of Poetry.

I. At this point there begins a new stage of the Mythos of the Apocalypse, the purgatorial, which we are now to see unfolding into the second Cantica of Dante's poem. It shows the intermediate condition between Hell and Paradise, and no doubt springs from that strongest feeling of the heart, as well as deepest thought of the head, namely, mediation. The estranged soul must in some way be reconciled, that is, be mediated with the Divine Order when it seeks to return after a period of alienation. Purgatory, therefore, is founded upon mercy, and points out the way of salvation to the man of guilt.

Surely this feeling of mercy is not to be confined to the present life, it is illimitable, and leaps over even the boundary of death. It sweeps into futurity and there expands the green leaves of its hope before the struggling spirit. The sinful person, repentant at the last moment, cannot be lost without a breach in Heaven itself, he must have the opportunity of reconciliation after death, having still a will and responsibility. Very deep runs this current of humanity in man's heart through the ages, and always finds utterance in popular song and story. Thus Purgatory, with its process of purification, is born into the Apocalyptic Mythos, which is the

race's own revelation unto itself of its future existence. Note again the place which Purgatory holds in this Mythus; it occupies the middle portion, connecting the two extremes, Hell and Paradise, mediating by its very nature the two opposite sides of the spiritual universe, and reflecting most truly the divine image of him who is called supremely the Mediator — the great Middle-man between Earth and Heaven.

Mediation is, therefore, the key-note of the present Cantica, which in fact mediates the entire poem as well as the man in the poem, and carries him out of infernal discord into celestial harmony. It is no wonder that music begins to have an important part in Dante's Purgatorio, whose very thought is the basis of all concordance. Still the process is not a sudden one, it is a continuous battle and victory, a battle to be fought and won every day till the grand self-mastery is attained. That is, the purgatorial movement is an inner development, a perpetual reaching forth of the finite man out of his finitude, in which act he asserts his infinite nature, and takes possession of his eternal heritage.

Here we may find the reason why the Purgatorio commends itself more profoundly to the spirit of the present generation than the Inferno or the Paradiso. It has the idea of development, it shows the soul working out of all narrow limits, moving from the

imperfect toward the perfect, seeking to realize what is truest and highest of itself. The soul's actual condition is weakness, sin, finitude; its ideal condition, to which it is bending all its energies, is strength, blessedness, the Infinite, God himself. Once in this path, it can never stop; up, up it is going, till it reaches the vision of the Divine in the Empyrean.

Now, in the *Inferno* and *Paradiso*, the element of progress is not present, at least not so strongly present. The spirit seems unalterably fixed in its limitations of Hell or Heaven, in fire or felicity, quite unable to fly apparently. A certain theological rigidity possesses these souls; they have free-will, yet their freedom is that they be imprisoned in the dark ugly hole below or in some room of the light beautiful palace above. The idea of the Purgatory is, therefore, more acceptable to the modern consciousness which, largely born of science, insists upon development, even in the world beyond. Indeed Theology, most granitic of all forms of human spirit, is getting tinged with evolution, and the old dogma of a crystallized damnation or salvation is breaking up inside the Church. Still I do not think that the *Purgatorio* is as powerful a poem as the *Inferno*, though it be more consonant with the spirit of our own time.

Mediatorial is its whole tone and character, such is the thought to which the mind always

comes back in its perusal. The key-stone of the arch we may call this principle, upholding the bridge which connects Earth and Heaven, and upon which man is to travel beyond; it is the bond of union between the finite and the infinite, the mean which holds together the two grand extremes; without it the universe would be split into a warring dualism. The purgatorial process is the concrete work of which *Inferno* and *Paradiso* are the partial abstractions; it is the totality of which they are the sides, the complete reality of which they are more or less the ideal phases.

Dante himself indicates this fact all through the present *Cantica*. Hell and Heaven simply furnish him with bad and good examples to be held up before the sinner in the actual process of Purgatory. The sinner is to be deterred by the one, and encouraged by the other, in the lofty work of the spirit's purification; he is to take up both extremes into himself, that they become constituent elements of his being. Purgatory is the grand movement from the pit to the dome of God's temple, from the great estrangement below to the greater reconciliation above, and most mortals are somewhere on the road going in one direction or the other.

Of these mortals is Dante himself. He is alive, yet he is now to enter the purgatorial process and share in its discipline. From his forehead, specially, are the Seven Sins to be

expunged, after he comes out of the trial. In the other *Canticas* he is more the spectator, yet not wholly so. In Hell, he becomes at times demonic, and shares in the character of the place; in Heaven, he rises to the vision of the Highest at the end of his journey. Still, his participation is small in both these portions, compared to what it is in the *Purgatorio*. In the one case he seems to be moving through a vast gallery of spirits, each of whom appears fixed, or limited to a single locality, while he moves forward and looks. In the other case, he is one of the purgatorial spirits himself; in fact, the chief one undergoing purification.

Still, in the *Inferno* and *Paradiso*, it is plain that Dante is getting the discipline of his journey by way of contemplation, if not by actual experience. For him, the living man, Hell and Heaven are really purgatorial; they are a portion of his spiritual training, here and now. But for the souls of the departed the stages of the Future Life are the three described, and the living man is passing through this soul-gallery of the Ages, and making it his own.

And just here may be given the first and last injunction to the reader who is seeking to get possession of the present poem: he must follow Dante in participation, and thus make the *Purgatorio* a portion of his own life. Its discipline we are to share and to transform into our discipline.

We are not to elevate ourselves loftily above it, and from our critical perch look down proudly upon it, regarding it as a panoramic view of some realm wholly foreign to ourselves, which we are called upon to judge, possibly to damn. In reading it we are to enter into its process and seek the purification. Not the erudition, not the politics, not the theology, not even the enjoyment of the poetic beauties can we tarry with here; literature for once has become the serious matter in life, and poetry the grand purgation of the soul. No externals can constitute the mastery of this work, and its true interpretation is the cleansing of the waters of life, until we behold in the pure fountain thereof, not only the stainless reflection of the poet's thought and utterance, but also our own chastened spirit.

It may be truly said, therefore, that to read Dante's *Purgatorio* aright, the reader himself must enter Purgatory. But this is nothing peculiar to it; the same quality it has along with all great Literature. The supreme books of the world are in the best sense purgatorial; they put the soul through a process of purification; they show the grand discipline of life; misfortune is seen to be the test of the spirit and man shows himself as the fate-compeller. Not easy reading are the great books; somehow they refuse to mean much till they be translated anew out of their temporal environment of dates and events

into the vernacular of the eternal, wherein every man has at last to make his own translation. Literature, at its mightiest, cares little for our pleasure, but cares all for our discipline; it shows man transcending his limitations of folly, passion, sin, and making himself the master of destiny, inner and outer; it keeps always before its ideal presence the free soul, one which is not imprisoned in self-made walls. Take ancient Homer, he puts his hero Achilles into the sharpest purgatorial training on account of wrath and pride, until that hero becomes truly a hero by transcending his limits, by a self-conquest far greater than his conquest of Hector. Whoever does not see this purgatorial element in the Iliad, this terrific discipline of the individual out of limitation, has not reached the soul of the old Greek poet. And what else is the whole story of Ulysses? Coming down to the modern world, I do not know of any purgatorial discipline which equals that of Shakespeare's *Lear*. Dante's poem, therefore, stands not alone in its spirit and purpose, but draws the blood of its life from the great purgatorial heart of the ages. Still in form and treatment, it has its own mighty individuality, which is chiefly manifested in the fact that it is cast into the future world and portrays the ordeal of purification there, which, however, is also the ordeal here.

II. Such is the one side, the inner subjective



process of mediation found in Dante, the process which takes place in the soul of the individual, and mediates it with the Divine. But mediation has a corresponding objective side, which shows itself in the movement of civilization, in the sweep of the World's History. The world-historical spirit has also its epoch of mediation, and this is just the epoch of Dante's book, the period of its appearance in time. Medieval we call this period, the age which stands in the middle.

Of our Occidental history there have been three stages: ancient, medieval and modern, the three stones of civilization which form the arch of time out of the Orient to the West. Each of these stages has had as its supreme representative a world-poet: Homer the ancient, Dante the medieval, Shakespeare the modern. In this high company I would also place Goethe, who belongs to the present, indeed, but more to the future.

Of the three great epochs above mentioned, the Middle Age is the mean, veritably the middle term of history and of all culture. Sometimes this period is spoken of disparagingly, and the attempt has even been made to throw it out of man's spiritual training altogether. Take away the middle term of the race's development! Pluck out the key-stone of the arch of time! Hardly will it be accomplished without leaving the whole structure in ruins. For the Middle Age is not

only middle in Time, but middle in Spirit, and manifests not only an outer but also an inner mediation.

The Occident opens emphatically in the *Iliad* with its great birth-battle at Troy, which is the true significance of the Trojan war. The rise of the individual there takes place, asserting freedom and development. But individuality becomes individualism in the ancient world, and it perishes through the disease of its very excellence, through the one-halfness of its strongest virtue. The Middle Age sought to save man and the world by mediating the individual with the universal, humanity with divinity. For this purpose it transformed God's world into an ecclesiastical organism, and put man into the same, whereby individuality was again stunted and freedom was in danger of being lost. Hence the Modern Age rises and fights over afresh the great Homeric battle, restoring to the individual his right of liberty and development, yet preserving, we hope, the divine side of the universe, which is veritably in some danger of getting lost, as in the old Greek period.

The Middle Age is, accordingly, not only intermediary, but mediatorial; its place in Time images its place in the movement of the World-Spirit. The history of the Middle Age is the history of mediation. The Church is the center of the medieval period, and the Church,

in its vast organization from the Pope down to the parish priest, is one long series of mediatorial powers, whose object is to mediate the humblest member with the highest, with God himself. The medieval struggle of Church and State is the struggle to complete and hold intact the grand mediatorial organism. Even the excesses of the Middle Age are seeking to realize the same principle in some form. The Crusades were an attempt to get a literal material possession of the land and the sepulchre of the Mediator, dreaming thereby to acquire something more of his spirit.

Often Dante's poem is called medieval, and this word, indeed, names its place in history, which belongs to the middle epoch of the Occidental time. But the same word hints its deepest spiritual trait, which is that of mediation. It is the mightiest outgrowth, as well as the best reflection of its period, hence, it is a Literary Bible for the race, which has passed through, and must still pass through this great mediatorial process, which every individual must repeat in some form, and thus make his own.

Moreover, Dante's poem, like history itself, is divided into three main portions, of which the middle one, the Purgatorio, is supremely mediatorial. Thus, the *Divine Comedy* seems to have taken its organism from the grand Arch of Time. Hell is Heathendom, mainly, or the relapse there-

to ; Purgatory is Christendom, with its doctrine of reconciliation ; Heaven is the ideal attainment of the future, whereof our modern epoch may be hopefully the beginning.

In such manner we may bring before us the fact that the great poem is both mediatorial and medieval, mediating the spirit of man on the one hand, and the spirit of the world on the other. Yet both thoughts are at bottom one thought, which clothes itself in many forms, one of which is the Mythos, true child of the people, who therein image to themselves what is working most deeply within their souls.

III. Having traced this thought in what may be termed its profoundest embodiment, namely in the World's History, we may turn for a moment and note its most superficial manifestation, which is seen in numbers. Two is the number most opposed to unity, harmony, wholeness and holiness ; twoness is the outer separation which becomes internal in dualism, dubitation, doubt, all of them spiritual forms of duality, which is also found in the German word *Zweifel*. Nay, we hear a distant echo of the same number in Dis, Deuce, Devil. It is, therefore, a consonance of merely external form with what is deepest in spirit that Dante divides his *Inferno* into two main portions, while most of its sub-divisions are multiples of two. Hell is twoness, an open gaping chasm, is chaos with its two prodigious jaws

snapping up heavenward, and the Devil is at the bottom of it.

On the contrary, three has the intermediary unit which unites; it is the number which speaks concord, reconciliation, peace, in fine, mediation. From time immemorial it has been known as the sacred number among men, and is connected with the most sacred instincts of the human heart. The family is threefold, being made up of the two parents and the mediating child; the Gods are threefold, from the Indian Trimurti to the Christian Trinity. No wonder then that Dante's *Purgatorio* has threeness in its divisions, the mediatorial number, which solves the dualism of Hell. Not too much stress is to be placed upon the play of numbers, which at best is external and can become the source of great absurdity and delusion. Still we may well grant there is some truth in the view of ancient Pythagoras who could read in figures the soul of the universe. The most superficial reflection of the Divine Order is the numerical, still a reflection it is and it must be taken up into the universal poem. So the *Purgatorio* and the whole *Divine Comedy*, regarded as one work, is marked by triplicity in its divisions, and even in its stanza, the *terza rima*.

Dante himself, as we see in his other books, has a tendency to a somewhat fantastic sport with numbers. But he may well have felt, with

many of the deepest, subtlest and most sincere spirits of all time, the grand mediatorial thought which lurks in threeness, and makes it finally the outward phase of the profoundest fact of Christendom. Still it cannot be denied that the number three has been much juggled with, being deprived of its spiritual suggestion and transformed into a purely external dose of dogma which all must swallow or be damned.

Next to three in sacredness is the number seven, the holy number of the Bible, and especially of the Apocalypse, with which our poet had so much in common. Still he is inclined to derive seven from three and one, as we see in his classification of the Seven Sins (*Purg. XVII*), which he divides first into three classes, then he puts three sins into a class in two cases, and one sin into the intermediate class by itself. The scheme thus shows unity at the center, flanked by trinity on each side, as follows, 3-1-3, or Pride (Envy) Anger — Sloth — Avarice (Gluttony) Lust. In this last arrangement the eye will detect a threefold manifestation of the three and one, and the middle (or mediatorial) term is repeated thrice. Out of seven, therefore, comes a trebled triplicity, or a threefold suggestion of the Trinity, which is surely enough.

IV. The doctrine of Purgatory, as the intermediate place between Heaven and Hell, is not found in the early Church. The first ecclesiasti-

cal authority for making it a part of the Christian system is said to be St. Augustine, in the 5th Century. The next important step was taken by Gregory the Great, in the year 604. The idea of purgatorial penance after death and the remission thereof in part or in whole through the "suffrages" (prayers, masses, etc.), of the living had by degrees struck root universally in Catholic Christendom. Two Councils have decrees upon the subject. The first is that of Ferrari-Florence (1140). The second is the Council of Trent, which affirmed and defined Purgatory as a doctrine of the Church, now made necessary by the dispute about it with Protestantism. Besides these authoritative declarations, the scholastic theologians very fully and subtly elaborated the system of purgatorial penalties and the method of their remission. Then came the grand reaction of the North, which sought to go back to the primitive Church.

It is well known that Protestantism has rejected Purgatory as a doctrine of the Future State. It so happened that the Reformation turned upon the abuse of indulgences, which touched the remission of purgatorial penalties, and which were sometimes sold for money. Yet the old Church had long before condemned strongly the traffic in indulgences, which were not intended to permit sin or to remit the guilt thereof. Some of the Bulls of the Popes on this

subject had the clause: "If anything be given as the price of this indulgence, the indulgence itself becomes null."

Protestants, accordingly, affirm that "the souls of believers at their death are made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory." Thus Purgatory vanishes as a future condition of the soul out of the Protestant doctrine, but the literature sprung of Protestantism makes good the deficiency and strongly enforces the purgatorial nature of this life. As a consequence Dante's poem, in the present century at least, has found its best expounders, its warmest admirers, and its most numerous readers in the Protestant world among Germanic peoples, while the Catholic Latin peoples, except the Italians, who naturally study their greatest poet out of patriotism, have not distinguished themselves by a very extensive Dante literature. The reason is plain. The Catholic Latin peoples have still in the Church what we of the Protestant Communion must mainly derive from letters. Protestantism, while striking at abuses, struck at mediation itself, and has been feeling its own blow ever since. Teutonia, in her own native home and in the seats of her Anglo-Saxon children, Protestant though she be for the most part, studies and assimilates Dante, who supplies a genuine want to Protestants, helping them back to an ideal unity with the venerable Church of the Ages. A poet



has had the power to unite again the Latin and the German races spiritually, so that in his song the greatest rent of Christendom is seen to be vanishing.

It is true that this poet had a strong element of Teutonism, both in his politics and poetics. The German Emperor was to him the heir of Rome's secular authority, and co-equal with the Pope, holding Rome's spiritual authority. Then his art in its deepest character, is Gothic, not Classic by any means, in spite of Virgil and heathen culture. Underneath all his learning his poetic instinct reaches down and communes with the soul of the North, of which he is in part the outgrowth.

Thus to a certain degree the purgatorial Mythus has been restored to the Protestant world through Dante, and through Literature, after the theologians of the reformation had cast it out of the dogma. The people must have the purgatorial idea, and have it in a mythical form, be it inside or outside of the organized Church. And still further, if mediation be given them in an abstract form, as a creed or theological doctrine, they will mythologize it over again, for they are bound to have it in their own concrete form, which is the truly poetic one, or the primitive material of poetry. This leads us to a new part of our subject, so we pass from the purgatorial idea to its primal embodiment, which is the Mythus.

## II. THE MYTHUS OF PURGATORY.

Often we must recur in our thought to the fact that the whole *Divine Comedy* is at bottom mythical, is a tale of the people concerning their future life, which tale has unfolded through all the ages. Hence we ask at this point, What has been the development of the purgatorial Mythus in Time? How did it unfold historically into the consciousness of man as shown in Dante's poem?

Then follows the second question. We shall find that both the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio* go back to a common origin in the Mythus; what is the relation between the two realms? Certainly there is a difference between them, but there is also a point of unity. Is it ever possible for the sinner to escape from Hell into Purgatory, according to Dante?

These two subjects we shall now take up in succession, seeking to discriminate the parts which Mythology and Theology have respectively played in forming the purgatorial conception.

I. It is not by any means in the learned doctrinal utterances of the Church and her Theologians concerning Purgatory, that we can find the index of its power in the world. Far deeper and mightier is its mythical stream flowing out of and into the hearts and imaginations of the

people. The idea of mediation, in the life beyond as well as in this life, entered from the beginning the popular Christian Literature of Europe, and wove into the same a wonderful variety of tales, legends, miracles, whose final bloom and poetic transfiguration is this poem of Dante, especially the *Purgatorio*, or second portion.

The purgatorial phase of the Mythus of the Apocalypse is not the creation of Dante, or even of Christianity, but is an outgrowth of the ages. Its beginning reaches far back in the Orient, to the early religions of the race, and follows the stream of human development into Hellas, where it assumes its most striking form in the philosophy of Plato, whose Acherousian Lake was a place of purification for the wicked who were repentant. In fact Plato is the purgatorial philosopher for all time; in the form of myth, allegory and abstract doctrine the idea of purgation runs through all his important writings, and gives them a purifying influence, which makes them one of the chief literary treasures of the race, and a religion for all religions. From Plato the same idea descended to Virgil, the Roman poet, and the spirit-guide of Dante; also to the Christian Fathers, who finally elaborated it into a system. (For a fuller account of this subject see author's *Commentary on Dante's Inferno, Introduction.*)

The apocalyptic element has a fascination for the Christian mind, and nobody ought to be surprised at finding it permeating the books of the people. The New Testament itself furnishes the starting-point with its visions, of which St. Paul, who was caught up into the third Heaven and beheld things unspeakable, and St. John in the *Revelations* are examples which have begotten a vast literature.

Two visions, which had great currency in the British Islands, are mentioned by Venerable Bede (8th Cent.). That of Furseus states the conception, which is still popular, that at the end of the world a general conflagration is to take place, which will be the grand purification from all sin. That of Drihthelm has a more advanced idea of Purgatory, inasmuch it asserts that the souls punished there are helped by the prayers of the living, as well as by alms and masses.

But about the middle of the twelfth century these floating legends of Purgatory, scattered and seething all over Europe, were centralized and localized in one legend, which became famous throughout Christendom. On an island in Lough Derg, a small Irish lake, was a cave, whose supernatural powers were published far and wide, and made the place a center of pilgrimage from every Christian land. This was St. Patrick's Purgatory, whose renown preceded Dante 150 years, and which is said to be still

visited in the present century by pious pilgrims seeking some relief from the burden of their sins (see Wright's *St. Patrick's Purgatory*, 1844).

Many were the tales and marvelous visions recorded by those visiting Lough Derg. All had to enter a cave and go through a ritual, when the great experience, the purification and the forgiveness, took place. Most celebrated of these accounts was the story of *Owaine the Knight*, told by Henry of Saltrey, an English Benedictine monk, which story is curious for its parallelisms with Dante, though the date of the descent is placed in 1153. Owaine seems to have gone in the body, not in the spirit, and to have seen many kinds of fiends and of tortures, which were a part of the grand discipline. Moreover, he finds two sorts of punishments, one by intense heat and one by intense cold. He also reached the terrestrial Paradise, not on the top of a mountain, however, though it was the original dwelling-place of Adam and Eve before the fall. But they had been taken out of infernal pain by Christ when he descended into Hell.

All these legendary fragments we find in Dante, who no doubt drew most of his mythical stores at first hand from the people, those who create and preserve them till the poet comes, who transfigures them into unity and beauty. The story of Owaine was first written in Latin, then transferred to the vernacular of most countries of

Europe, whereby it became truly a Mythus of universal import. No less than three French metrical versions belong to the thirteenth century, and Wright mentions two English versions, from one of which he makes copious extracts.

As regards the location of Purgatory, there was a great variety of opinions. It was mostly placed in contact with Hell, from which it often could not be separated by any clear dividing line. Still the idea of purification was never lost, and the final attainment was Paradise. Sometimes it was on the Earth in a remote valley; sometimes on a distant island of the sea, which could only be reached by a long, arduous voyage. Again it was sought for in a wood inhabited by elves and goblins, wherein we may note the blending of the Christian Mythus with the Heathen Fairy-tale of the North. A famous journey was once made eastward to find Paradise in some scriptural locality, which was supposed to be where the junction between Heaven and Earth took place. This journey is narrated in the legend of the three Monks of Mesopotamia, who found Hell and Purgatory, but not Heaven. Sometimes Purgatory was a place in the air, suspended between land and sky, a truly symbolic touch; but oftenest it was a hole in the Earth like Hell, wherein classical Mythology furnishes many parallels, such as the cave of Trophonius and the Sybil's cavern.

We may regard it as a merit in Dante that he makes Purgatory a mountain which has to be painfully climbed by the person undergoing purification, and which has many circles marking the gradation of the process. Thus the poet has seized the happiest symbol of it and made the same eternal. Yet this suggestion too is found repeatedly in the purgatorial Mythus before Dante's time. There is an author of the twelfth century, Jocelyn by name, who has transferred St. Patrick's Purgatory from the hole in the Earth to the top of a mountain.

At this point the Mythus of the Terrestrial Paradise usually plays in, which Paradise is located on the mountain's summit, and is the reward of the hard labor of climbing. Moreover, from Hebrew symbolism the spiritual Mountain with its difficult ascent and happy end has been transmitted through the religious literature of the Occident. The Delectable Mountain of Bunyan is only one of the peaks of a range running back to Judea, and Dante's purgatorial Mountain is another, highest of the range and nearest Heaven, having also on its top the Terrestrial Paradise, primitive home of Adam and Eve.

It has been supposed that a geographical fact influenced Dante in the location of his Purgatory and earthly Paradise toward the West. Out in the Atlantic Ocean, southwestward of Europe, lies an Island out of which rises the peak of

Teneriffe, which was quite on the border of the unknown part of the globe in Dante's age. From the tales of navigators, which since time immemorial incline to the fabulous, the poet may have received the suggestion of placing his Purgatory in that direction on the other side of the globe. Still, from the *Odyssey* down, a large portion of Wonderland has been reached by water, and lies in the West. The Greek *Hesperides*, situated afar over the waves toward the setting sun, and the *Fortunate Isles* of the Middle Age were phases of the *Mythus* which prefigured not only the New World physically, but the New Life spiritually.

It is to be noted that Dante follows the Greek tendency of the *Mythus* and places Paradise westward, while the Hebrew tendency of the *Mythus* was to place Paradise eastward. European legend divided upon the point. Orient and Occident struggled for mythical supremacy in the soul of Europe. The Fathers of the Church and the Theologians, among them Thomas Aquinas, followed strictly the scriptural account as might be expected from their Hebrew training, and located Paradise in the East, and furthermore regarded the putting of it in the West as a piece of paganism. But the people refused to be dominated by the Semitic *Mythus* in this respect, and clung to their ancient Aryan heritage, which was the West. For the Aryan spirit, from its



first split and migration far back in Asia, has always shouted, Westward, ho ! and still further Westward ! whither it has ever gone in pursuit of its earthly Paradise. That ancient prehistoric instinct, truly reflected in its Mythus, is still at work, driving the Europeans out of Europe to America, and across the American Continent back to the old world toward their primitive seats, belting the globe with Aryan migrations. Dante in turning from the East to the West for his Eden is true to his race and to its Mythus, which voices the aspiration of his race. Unconsciously true, doubtless, he was in this case as in so many others, where his instinct breaks through his culture and utters itself in the pure mythical stream of the popular heart in spite of all his erudition and philosophy, and in spite even of religious authority.

The next great step in the unfolding of the purgatorial Mythus is the introduction of a moral allegory. The descriptions of the earlier visions and journeys, were highly colored for a rude people, who loved the sensuous fullness of horrors and punishments, as well as of delights and rewards. But with time the inner moral process of the soul in its discipline began to be emphasized. The virtues and the vices became the leading persons, or rather personifications. Again we observe a literary culmination of this kind of writing. A thousand tales of the Pilgrim's Prog-

ress are strung along down time till they flower forth at their best in the book of John Bunyan.

In the medieval Catholic period, the moral allegory had a tendency to gather around the Seven Sins and their purgation. This fact comes out distinctly in a poem by Rutebeuf, who belonged to the thirteenth century, and so wrote a little before Dante's period. The *Way of Paradise* is the title of his work, in which the pilgrim comes first to Dame Penitence, and then his next resting-place is the house of Confession. The castle of Pride, Dame Avarice, Mesdames Ire and Envy — the author is a Frenchman — are all here in due order of succession, and after them come the strongholds of Accidia (Sloth), Gluttony, Luxury (Lust). Thus we see that not only the Church but also Literature had prepared the moral as well as the mythical content of the Purgatorio for Dante, who preserves the same arrangement of the Seven Sins, but deepens the thought and transfigures the whole from a pale allegory into the living process of man's purification.

It has even been thought that a German nun, Mechtildis of Helpede, was the original of Dante's Mathilda, and furnished some suggestions to the poet. She was the author of a book which is in the nature of a vision of the future world, and which has many points in common with the *Divine Comedy*, specially with the Purgatorio. She

portrays a Mountain of Virtue, which is divided into seven portions for purging the seven mortal sins, though her ordering of them is somewhat different from that of Dante. It is not probable that the poet ever knew of the Teutonic nun far over the Alps, or of her book, which seems to have been originally written in German. But it is an interesting evidence (she died in 1292) of the working of the Mythus of the Apocalypse during Dante's time, and indicates that he took as his theme what was universally fermenting throughout Christendom.

It is plain that only one step more can be taken when the last shred of the mythical garb will be torn away, and the Seven Sins will appear in all their naked abstractness; wherewith we enter the domain of Theology, which is essentially an interpretation of the Mythus into abstract doctrines, or the working over the forms of the Imagination into the forms of the Understanding. Yet it is equally certain that the reverse process also takes place; that is, if the Mythus is wrought over into Theology, Theology in turn is wrought back into the Mythus. Both processes are in Dante. Undoubtedly the purgatorial Mythus obtained much support from scholastic Theology, which elaborated and taught the system of the Seven Sins, and the purification of the soul from their influence. Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventura, both Theologians, were the special sources

for Dante's ideas upon this subject, and the mythical and the theological streams flow together in the great poet, who touches folk-lore, the voice of the people, on one side, and Theology and Philosophy, the voice of the learned, on the other.

Both processes, we say, are in Dante, he turns legend into doctrine, but still more profoundly does he turn doctrine back into legend. Unquestionably he theologizes the Mythus, but his true genius is to mythologize Theology. His Purgatory contains the ethico-religious tenets of the Schoolmen transfigured into poetry. To a certain extent the *Summa* of Aquinas now takes the place of the *Aeneid* of Virgil, which he largely metamorphosed into the Inferno. Dante was a theologian and a philosopher, but deepest of all, a poet; hence the Mythus seizes hold of him most strongly and is the fundamental form which holds his Theology and his Philosophy as well as his temporal relations.

II. Having thus considered the historic development of the purgatorial conception, we shall next proceed to glance at the common starting point of both the Inferno and Purgatorio in the Mythus, which is their unity, then we shall note the dualism which is introduced into this unity by Theology, finally we shall try to cast a look into the poet's soul, and observe there the struggle which is born of the aforesaid dualism. Per-

haps Dante's chief inner conflict, as revealed in his poem, lies between his unconscious mythical tendency and his conscious theological doctrines. The ground-forms of the Poet's spirit and of the Time's spirit reach back to oneness in the Mythus, whereof come his deepest harmonies; but doubt, discord and contradiction will be introduced by his dogmatic Theology, and the clear fountain of poetry will be made turbid at times by his struggles to reconcile the irreconcilable, namely, the mythical and the theological views of the world-order.

The origin of Hell and Purgatory is the same according to Dante (see *Inf.* XXXIV.), going back to the primordial act of God himself, who according to the old Mythus hurled Satan out of Heaven and sent him headlong through space till he struck our globe at a point opposite to Jerusalem. Part of the land there in that quarter "came to our hemisphere," the Northern, and has remained here ever since, but a part fled backwards, and, rushing up toward the sky, formed the Mountain of Purgatory. Such is Dante's mythical way of connecting 'of our planet with the great original Fall; the primitive dualism between God and Satan has imaged itself physically and spiritually on our little earth-ball in the Inferno and Purgatorio, two results exactly opposite, one being the evil, the other being the remedy of the evil. Still the

unity of the two is given, both are traced back to their common source in the Divine Will; whatever Theology may do, the Mythus never leaves the universe in the throes of a divided, self-assailing Idea.

It is manifest to every thoughtful reader that the relation between the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio* becomes an important question in the understanding of Dante. The physical shape of each place first challenges thought and calls forth the symbolic activity of the spirit. The one is a deep hole in the Earth in the form of an inverted cone ridged around with projecting circles; the other is a high mountain on the Earth, in the form of an upright cone terraced about with projecting circles. They are made for each other, they fit, we exclaim; let them be clapped together, the hole of Hell will be filled up and evened off by the mountain of Purgatory, and therewith will be the end of both, and Heaven alone will be left. So we think in spite of a possible difference in size. Surely the suggestion is that the infernal torment of sin, the work of the fiend, is cured by the purgatorial process; Hell itself is mediated by the great realm of mediation.

With such a thought in the soul we begin to ask: Does any spirit ever escape from Dante's *Inferno*? Its walls are indeed strong, but have they ever been broken down at any point? Surely

not without some kind of repentance, but can the individual repent in Hell, and thus transform it into a kind of Purgatory? In other words, is Hell absolutely hopeless, or has it a remedial possibility?

Such questions arise in the mind of Dante's reader and demand some satisfaction with no little importunity. Now it is my opinion that they can be answered in two opposite ways, and that both ways can find support in the poem. This has points which go to prove that Hell is remedial, and other points which indicate that Hell is not remedial. What shall we do in the face of such a contradiction? Something of this sort: See it clearly, accept it, and then find the ground of it in the man and in the time.

There can be no doubt that the first impression made by Dante's *Inferno* is that of permanence, fixity, everlasting imprisonment; no escape, no hope, nothing but gloom and torture. This impression is chiefly produced by the terrible inscription over Hell's Gate. The people inside are said to be lost; the place is declared to be eternal, "leave all Hope ye who enter." The soul appears to be limited to a given circle, fixed forever in its little hole; it is never seen rising from Hell to Purgatory, or receiving any fruits of its terrible discipline. None are known to repent; in fact, if they did repent, they would be no longer in Hell. Persistent, defiant are the

spirits here, and just for that reason they are here, they are said to have lost the "Good of the Intellect," they refuse to accept their punishment as coming from themselves and from God too. And this hopeless damnation was the Christian Theology of Dante's time, it is largely the Christian Theology of to-day, in spite of deep-seated protest among believers. Mark this protest well, it is in Dante also, unconscious mostly, but nevertheless very active.

Herewith we may turn to the other side, and observe in what way and how often the Inferno was transcended. In the first place the Hebrew worthies were taken out, in consonance with the old legend, yet this was done by the special act and favor of Christ himself, who was not ready to damn his ancestors. Not the work of Dante then; but it is his work when Ripheus is saved and placed high in Paradise — Ripheus being a heathen, with Justice as the crown of his excellence (*justissimus unus*). This one example shatters the walls of Limbo, the abode of the good Heathen, as with an earthquake. Then Trajan, the Emperor, was saved by the prayers of St. Gregory; intercession, accordingly, can work backwards and take the soul out of Hell as well as out of Purgatory. Finally Roman Cato is rescued and given a place of authority in Purgatory. To be sure these three men were conceived by Dante as being originally in Limbo,



which contains the good Heathen, and is not under the judgment of Minos. Still they were there inside the walls of the Inferno, and inside the Gate with the terrible inscription, which calls them "the lost people" and bids them abandon all Hope. Yet there is some Hope after all, it seems.

In the second place, throughout the Purgatorio Dante cites Heathen examples of virtue alongside the Christian ones, giving to both apparently quite equal validity. All are examples of incitement to the good, paradisaical examples; for instance, Orestes stands for the opposite of envy alongside of Mary, and Pisistratus is cited as the model of the man without anger. It is not affirmed hereby that these virtuous Heathen were in Heaven, yet the implication is that their virtue belonged there, and Dante so recognized it in his treatment of them. Cæsar appears in Limbo, yet he also is designated in the Purgatory as a worthy example of freedom from Sloth. In the Christian Purgatorial process, therefore, the virtues of the illustrious Heathen are a very important part of the discipline for Heaven, and are placed alongside of Christians who are in Paradise.

In the third place, we must recollect that even according to the inscription on Hell's Gate, Primal Love (*Primo Amore*) had a fundamental part in creating the Inferno. Not a place of Jus-

tice alone, though Justice is terribly present; Hell is also the manifestation of Divine Love, could we but see it to the bottom through the smoke and flame. Love seeks not the ruin of the man, but the ruin of his beloved vices, whereby he must be put into fire of one sort or other. Love can only save the individual by destroying his sin; it tries through punishment to bring home to him his guilt, folly, finitude, and thus to free him of them all. Verily the last word of the infernal inscription, Love, means not damnation, being a remedial word which goes back and helps to expunge the terrible sentence.

It is also declared that the Madonna, the merciful one, "breaks the hard judgment up there" in Heaven (*Inf.* II. 96), whereby some are released from the Inferno. Again, there is intercession in Paradise for the damned: "When I am before my Lord, I shall praise thee to him," says Beatrice to Virgil. This praise, we must suppose, will do some good, and the only good it can do is to rescue the Heathen poet from Limbo. Even a living saint could by prayer rescue Trajan many hundred years after death. All these passages are unconscious utterances of Dante thrown out by the way, but this state of the poet's mind is just what we wish to spy out in secret.

Then there is Dante himself, a living man, but

none the less a human soul, who has passed from the infernal to the purgatorial condition. It is acknowledged that Purgatory can mediate Hell in the present life; why should it not beyond also, to Dante's mind? Death draws the line, it is said, but why should it? Is there any reason why life should terminate the purgatorial process? Is it not a matter of spirit anyhow? So every man feels instinctively, so Dante must have felt. How often does he affirm in his poem that he had to go through Hell in order to be saved! "There was no other way" (*Purg.* I. 62), says Virgil, to rescue him from his folly and sin. That is, Hell is to Dante, the living man, a discipline, a Purgatory, and he repeats an ideal Hell for every soul in the purgatorial ordeal, since it furnishes all the deterrent examples there, as we shall see.

If we lie in wait for the poet and surprise him in his unconscious moods, as we must in order to find out what is most deeply fermenting within him, we shall note many passages which imply that the individual can escape from the Inferno, when he so wills. And this brings us to the root of matter, Free-Will. Dante always clings to the doctrine of Free-Will, he does not deny it even to those in Hell. How can he? The possibility of repentance cannot be given up without destroying freedom, and the unfree man is not a man. His humanity lies in his self-determining power, which he never loses; if he is necessitated

by any act of his own, which binds him forever in damnation, he is not a self-controlled being and hence is not responsible. Man cannot sell his body into slavery in law ; still less can he will his spirit into servitude in religion. If the chain of sin ever becomes so strong that he cannot break it absolutely, he is no longer to blame for not breaking it. To be sure he has put himself into it, but the act of putting himself into it is not greater than the counter act of will-power ; he must be equally able to put himself out of it. Time may be very slow in unfolding the process, but all is possible in eternity. The doctrine of Free-Will implies two things: first that there is a going down to Hell for the man who wills it, and secondly, that there is a getting out of Hell for the man who wills it. One gift he has which is inalienable, freedom, and it must work both ways, or neither.

But here comes the difficulty which throws Dante and many others beside him into contradiction : Theology seeks to put a limit upon this primordial God-given faculty of the human soul. St. Augustine, sometimes called the first Theologian, starts the opinion in its flight down the ages, stating that man can "lose the power of doing righteously when he has the will." That is, man by an act of will can so bind his will that he really has no will. Hence unfolds the idea of fixed eternal damnation. Such is the one limit

to human freedom, that of the Inferno. Now Purgatory must have a corresponding limit. So Theology declares that when the individual has reached Purgatory, he cannot drop out of it, and go back to Hell. Fixed and firm he stands in the one as in the other, with will destroyed, the power of good and of evil is taken away, and the soul is getting crystallized into salvation or damnation.

Now, *Danté* consciously accepts and affirms these two theological limits for his two realms, yet he is unconsciously in a perpetual protest against them. His direct statements favor the dogma; his indirect utterances point to freedom. The one is his creed, the other is his faith; the first is his Theology, the second is his Religion. When he is a poet, he transcends limits and becomes truly universal; when he is a theologian, he drops back into limits, and belongs only to his own period. Two *Dantes* we see, the finite and the infinite, the world-embracing man of all time, and the narrow medieval soul of a moment on the clock of the ages. *Dante the Great* and *Dante the Little* — both are written down in his poem, and both are in one mighty struggle, which is the struggle between Earth and Heaven, between Time and Eternity.

Both sides, therefore, can be found in his book. The skillful partisan can show abundant argument for just the one side of the case; but the

impartial reader can see both sides and see them in action and counteraction. For it is this struggle of the spirit seeking to master its limitations, which makes the *Divine Comedy* a world-book, universal, truly human, inasmuch we all are in one way or other engaged in just such a struggle.

The whole *Divine Comedy* is the fitting of the individual into the Divine scheme; hence comes the organism of the poem, its fixed, definite, mathematical arrangement. Each man is put into his nook, where he belongs by his deed; so the scheme is fore-ordained, providential, eternal. Still just the opposite is present also, namely the freedom of the individual, who puts himself into his place in the scheme by his own free will. Thus all men are organized by their disposition and their deeds into a colossal world-order; there they are in their nooks, duly labeled and pigeon-holed, ready for reference. Not the unfolding of the shades of character, not the psychological details such as we find in Shakespeare, shall we seek in Dante; there is the one central burning-point of individuality with its freedom; then there is the vast overarching structure of the Divine Architect; both the man and the mansion go to make the poem.

In reference to the possible retrogression from the Purgatorio to the Inferno, no special instance is given by Dante. As already said, Theology

has stepped in with its fixed dogma and said no. Still the poet's Mythus has handed down the case of Adam, who certainly went backwards. Still further, the Mythus has transmitted the instance of Satan, who fell from the height of the Paradiso to the center of the Inferno, quite across the diameter of the Universe. Dante the poet is at bottom mythical, and gives an image or symbol which is often deeper and more universal than his Theology. The free man must be able to go backwards, that being just the condition of his going forwards; one he is at last, underneath all his dualism; good and evil are in him, Purgatory and Hell, both of which the ancient Mythus, true to the deepest truth, carries back to unity in a common origin from the Divine Act.

### III. THE CONSTRUCTION OF PURGATORY.

Perhaps nowhere in the *Divine Comedy* do we see the poet's structural gift working with as much subtlety as in the present Cantica, particularly in the second and most important portion. At present we wish to take a general survey of the whole purgatorial organism, which we shall look at from three points of view, physical, ethical, artistic.

I. *Physical*. At the start we may first observe the difference in physical appearance between the

Inferno and the Purgatorio. Let us glance upwards, behold the sky and the celestial bodies which now shine down upon the journey and illumine the whole world. Heaven mingles with Earth, which could not take place in the Inferno in spite of one or two allusions to the contrary, as for instance, where the Constellation of the Fishes (*Inf.* XI.) is seen "darting through the horizon" below in the pit. Light has come, light from above, not that diabolic flare of Satan's realm. Hence, we shall now have two kinds of landscape, terrestrial and celestial, which we may separate, but which, together, make the scenery of Purgatory.

The supreme, physical fact here is the purgatorial Mountain, situated on an island in the Southern Hemisphere, opposite to Jerusalem, and rising above the watery plain, high toward Heaven. The poet has given us no means for measuring the size or the height of the Mountain; we have much less use for numbers here than in the Inferno, and really, do not mathematics belong in Hell? Merely the width of a terrace, in Mid-purgatory, does the poet measure once, stating it to be thrice the length of the human body: wherewith mensuration will have to be satisfied.

The second important physical fact is the division of the Mountain into three main portions, lower, middle and upper, which we shall design-



nate respectively as Pre-, Mid-, and Post-purgatory. In the lower portion we have quite a varied landscape before us; there is a grassy meadow which leads to the sea-shore, where the waves bend the yielding rushes; then there is the mountainous ascent with projections and little valleys where the different kinds of procrastinators are undergoing the penalty of their earthly delay; finally, there are the shifting hues of light from dawn to sunrise, giving their silent, hopeful tone to the scene, in all of which we may feel the mood of Purgatory. The second, or middle portion of the Mountain, is sharply marked off into seven terraces, for the Seven Sins; these terraces are supposed to extend round the entire Mountain, and are connected by passages, so that the two poets ascend in a kind of spiral, since they go through only a part of each terrace. The third, or upper portion, is the Terrestrial Paradise, the original home of Adam and Eve, which has a stream of water running through it, and contains a circular forest, in whose center stands the Tree of Knowledge, and on whose eastern border rise the fountains of Lethe and Eunoe.

Thus we behold the triune division of Nature suggesting that of Spirit, and, as already observed, hinting from afar the idea of mediation. The Mountain itself connects Earth and Heaven, mediates what is below with what is above by way of Nature, and thus passes easily over into

the symbol of Purgatory for the human soul. The next thing, therefore, is to see this soul of the man making the purgatorial ascent, and to follow him on his path from base to summit.

Dante with his guide Virgil first comes up from his nether trip on the eastern side of the island, and, after winding about through the plain near the sea, begins to ascend the mountainous part of Pre-purgatory in the direction from East to West, and so continues with some deviations till he reaches Mid-purgatory. Here he at first moves by the right hand round the Mountain over a part of each terrace (or cornice), and then passes through a gate to the next terrace above. His first direction is northwestward, but he gradually bends round the Mountain and his course becomes directly westward, as soon as he has gone through one-fourth of the circumference of the Mountain — which point he reaches at the end of the second terrace. Thence his course gradually bends southwestward through another fourth of a circle when it is due south. This happens as soon as he has passed through the remaining five terraces, at which point he turns eastward and enters Terrestrial Paradise, moving thence in the direction from West to East, which direction is opposite to the one which he started with. He circles the northern half of the Mountain toward the Sun, which is in Aries and near the Equator. His passage through the first two

terraces occupies the first quarter of his semi-circular sweep, but he crowds the last five terraces into the second quarter thereof.

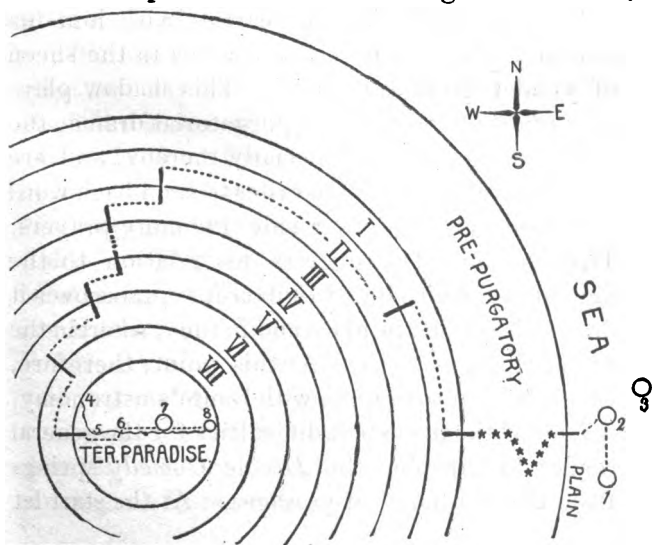
The following diagram is intended to illustrate Dante's course round the Purgatorial Mountain. The main points are indicated by the numerals.

1. The place of exit from the Inferno. Cato.
2. The shore where the rush is found.
3. The ship of souls arriving from the Tiber.

The starry line indicates the general path through Pre-purgatory. The dotted line shows the course through the seven Circles of Mid-purgatory.

4. The stream Lethe in Post-purgatory.

5. The place of Dante's meeting with Beatrice.



6. He is drawn through the waters of Lethe by Matilda.

7. The Tree of Knowledge.

8. Eunoe.

So much for the terrestrial scene of this purgatorial journey ; next we shall cast a glance above at its celestial environment and the relation thereof to the Earth and to the mortal man ascending the Mountain. Often he looks up at the heavenly bodies now, but hereafter he will look back at them from heights beyond them. For he is to rise over Moon, Sun and Stars to the Empyrean, where Space is not nor Time, where is the vision of the Divine. But he has not reached that point yet, though clearly on his way thither.

Dante is still alive, he carries with him his mortal body, and it casts a shadow in the sheen of yonder great Luminary. This shadow plays an important part in the purgatorial drama, the spirits recognize him especially thereby, and are eager to talk with him in order to send back word to friends on the other side for more prayers. That shadow also suggests his relation to the light above, which he still interrupts ; moreover it draws his outline in place and in time, wherein the whole Heavens assist. At this point, therefore, we shall have to grapple with Dante's astronomy.

One of the persistent difficulties for the general reader in grasping the *Divine Comedy* springs from the astronomical passages. At the start let

us find out their general purpose. Manifestly this is to take the individual Dante, now going his way up the purgatorial Mountain, and to adjust him in time and place, to give the When and the Where of the traveler in the temporal and spatial Universe. In order to do so, that Universe has to be summoned into our vision as it stood there in the presence of the poet. Earth, Sun and Stars, and sometimes the Moon and Planets, are cited before the imagination's tribunal, and are made to tell the Here and the Now of this man Dante, at certain significant stages of his journey. He calls up the entire Cosmos to measure his going and coming — he, the petty individual, yet the boundless spirit too, made after the divine image.

This moving and illuminated Cosmos is then what we may call Dante's clock, on which he reads the hour and the locality. Not a mechanical collection of cogs and wheels turned by a spring, but the machinery of the whole physical Universe driven by a mind — that is what he beholds marking every moment of his existence, what he hears ticking the seconds of this purgatorial journey. Where are we? What o'clock is it? Look up at the face of the Heavens and tell it from God's time-piece. A mere point in Nature is Dante climbing yonder. Yet this point is measured, established, mediated by the totality of Nature above and below, and he can

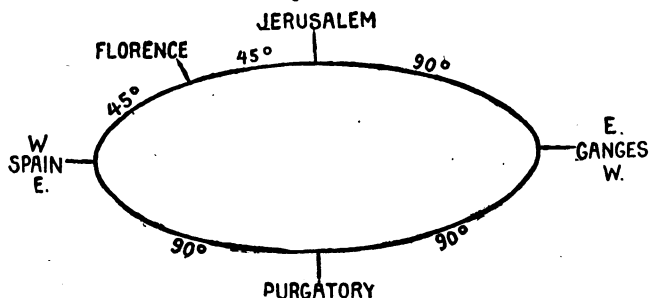
see the whole process in a flash of the spirit and thus girdle the Earth, Sun and Stars. Very artificial and narrowing is the time-measurer of to-day; the man now carries his watch in his pocket, takes it out and looks at it, instead of carrying the Universe in his brain for a horologue.

It becomes necessary for the determined reader to take apart Dante's clock and examine its general construction, that he may follow the poet in these local and temporal designations. Not with the professional accuracy of the astronomer must this be done, else confusion will result, for Dante is not scientifically accurate but is poetically true, using Nature as his symbol. Of his clock, then, we distinguish four main pieces, which, being put together and read aright, will tell the hour and place. These four pieces are the man at the center on the one hand, he whose particular moment and spot are to be ascertained, and on the other hand the three grand cycles (cosmical wheels of the clock) revolving with him and about him in different ways and whose conjunction with him localizes and temporalizes him in the poem.

Let us then take, first, a point on the Earth, occupied by this individual Dante, who is continually moving, shifting his relation to the world outside of himself. Moreover, he has the vision and the spirit, he must glance through the grand Whole around and above himself to the very bounds of the universe, and behold himself therein at this

given point both in Time and Space. We shall find, as before said, three great cycles encompassing him, which we may look at in their order.

• The first cycle is the total Earth, which is expressed by the poet in various ways. There are two hemispheres, Northern and Southern; the purgatorial mountain is in the Southern, yet the writer is in the Northern. Then there is day illuminating one-half the globe, yet pursued by night, darkening the other half, which is just opposite. But the chief terrestrial cycle is that which girdles the Earth eastward and westward; the antipode of Purgatory is Jerusalem, 180 degrees distant; half way between, at 90 degrees, lies Spain to the west, half way between lies India with the Ganges to the east. In this cycle, running round the whole Earth, Dante often adjusts himself, thus telling at what place he stands on the globe. The following little diagram may help the reader to bring before his mind this terrestrial cycle.



But to adjust himself more precisely, he has to look up at the sky where he finds the second cycle, that of the Sun, drawing a line of its own round the Earth, according to his astronomy. With the Sun come night and day, also the hours and their sub-divisions. The great Luminary out of the Heaven halves the Earth into sheen and shadow, and its passage divides the diurnal cycle in time. But this sun-line is itself a cycle within another greater cycle, just as the Earth's periphery, or the terrestrial cycle lies within it.

This third cycle within which the Sun moves, according to Dante's astronomy, is that of the Stars, specially the Zodiac, the stellar belt circling the sky. The Sun's place in it marks the time of the year, which is Spring at the period of the present journey, the whole being divided into four and twelve portions called seasons and months. Even this last cycle, to Dante's imagination, lies still within other cycles, as the *Primum Mobile* and the *Empyrean*; but with these we need have no reckoning at present.

So Dante takes his bearings, and states his position in the three great cosmical cycles about him — terrestrial, solar, zodiacal. He answers the question, Where am I, this individual, in the physical Universe? Where do I stand in all Space and Time, the two immensities? Profoundly suggestive and poetical it is to see the



grand totality of Nature reflecting itself in the one little point of Nature.

In such a lofty manner the poet employs the old Ptolomæic astronomy, and at once brings the reader into the presence of the Heavens, symbol of the Eternal. When he speaks of this particular time and place, he calls up what determines the same — Earth, Sun and Stars. It is a suggestion of the movement of man's spirit, which must reach forth and take up Space and Time, transcending both and thus asserting its infinite nature. Nay, it is a suggestion of the movement of the *Divine Comedy*, which is to ascend to Heaven, fly beyond Earth, Moon, Sun and Stars, and there behold God himself. These terrestrial glances upward are but the premonition of the celestial flight which is to take place; well it is that Dante adjusts himself here below by what he beholds above. A far-reaching symbol we must feel and see in these indications of the heavenly time-piece: nothing less than Man, the finite, mediated by the Infinite.

Difficult for us is the reading of time in this way, since it is not reduced to a machine. Yet even the terrestrial clock is but a copy, or an indicator of the grand celestial mechanism. Prose is the one, and made for the limited, practical understanding, very necessary and useful, one must say; but poetry is this clock of Dante's, universal, read only by a flash of the imagination

across the Universe. To ascertain the momentary, the poet summons the permanent; to find the where, he calls up everywhere. Even such an act shows man in the presence of the Divine, measuring and adjusting his temporal existence by what is eternal.

So put on your wings, O reader, when the poet begins to look up at the skies and draw a line from himself running through the Sun into the starry belt beyond; he is going to make a dash across the Universe to find out where he stands; you must fly with him or flounder.

There are four sunrises in Purgatory, and the position of Dante is changed each time; nay, for that matter, it is changed with every step he takes. He enters on the eastern side of the Mountain with the morning Sun at his back, and moves westward in a spiral course round the same till he reaches the western side, when he passes into Post-purgatory or Terrestrial Paradise, from whose entrance he moves eastward with the morning Sun shining in his face. Thus Pre-purgatory and Post-purgatory have each a sunrise. Mid-purgatory, however, being the longest and most important portion, has two sunrises, one at the beginning (IX. 44) and one in the middle, between Sloth and Avarice (XIX. 37). Keep in mind the circular movement round the Mountain, whose general direction eastward bends at first to the North, then to the South, making a half circle.

We should not fail, therefore, to grasp the symbolic purport of Dante's astronomy and his repeated adjustments within his cosmical scenery. He, the individual, in a particular point, at a particular moment, is also in the presence of the All — all Space, all Time, all Matter — and, too, in the presence of the spiritual All, which is determining him just then and there, in Time and in Space, and likewise in his spiritual environment. Yet that petty individual is Free-Will, and makes his own Time and Space, creates his own Universe, and puts himself into it by his own supreme fiat. The movement from East to West is also significant, it has been and still is the grand search of man for his Terrestrial Paradise; but mark! when he attains it, he turns back toward the East, toward the rising Sun for his light. Still further, we shall find the grand anticipation of the Celestial Paradise in this purgatorial astronomy; Planets, Moon, Sun, Stars are to be actually reached, and the still higher spheres that lie beyond them. At present, however, the poet can only look up yonder at the distant glories, and adjust his finite existence to them as well as he can, with the dim presentiment that they too are to be reached and even transcended.

II. *Ethical.* The whole physical structure of the Purgatorio is penetrated with the ethical element, so that Nature turns to one vast symbol of the spirit. This fact we have already duly noted

in the Inferno. Indeed we are never to lose sight of the fundamental thought that Hell and Purgatory are one in origin according to the ancient Mythos, which is the substrate of Dante's poem throughout. The Devil's alienation produced both, or, more remotely, the Divine Act caused both in expelling Satan from Heaven. Such is the mythical conception, essentially unifying the moral duplicity of the world, seeking to bring back the twofoldness of good and evil, which is the grand ethical dualism, to its original unity which is the primordial act of the Creator. The Pit and the Mountain physically, Hell and Purgatory ethically, are the two antipodes of the one Divine Deed, erected as the God-given homes of the two great classes of men; but it rests with the men themselves to choose the one or the other, and to take possession.

Herewith enters distinctively the human side — Free-Will. This is the principle to which Dante always returns after looking at any form of necessity, predestination, or even Providence. According to him it is the greatest gift of God to man; it is the supreme power in the individual to meet evil: *La voglia assoluta non consente al danno*; it is the foundation stone of Ethics, which "those who have gone to the bottom of the subject" have laid, and "therefore they have left morality to the world" (*Purg.* XVII. 68).

It depends accordingly upon man's own act

whether he enters Hell or Purgatory. That is, the two places are created over again by the Free-Will of the individual. To be sure, the Divine Order has both, must have both, else it were not the Divine Order. But the Man has both too, and chooses for himself, yes, creates for himself just the one which he desires. Providence is here, so is Free-Will, and both work together; indeed they are one at bottom, or become so. Man must have Free-Will, but he could not have unless there were a Hell and a Purgatory, in which his freedom is truly realized; in fact, this is just what they are in thought — the realization of man's freedom.

What then is Free-Will to choose, or, in other words, what is its supreme content? Dante has unquestionably decided ideas upon what this content should be; he calls it by various names, one of which is "the Good Essence" (*Purg.* XVII. 136), which means the Universal Good, or even God. Man must will, therefore, the Will of God, which is supremely Free-Will, and which has given to Man his greatest gift, namely, just this Free-Will, truly a divine possession.

Now, we may draw the following inference from the aforesaid, passing from the theological form thereof to a purely philosophical statement: the grand ethical ideal is the Free-Will, which wills Free-Will, in man and also in institutions. For man has both sides, he is a free being who

is to will freedom not only for himself but also for others ; therefore he creates a world of institutions, which are a product of his Free-Will, yet whose great ultimate object is to secure Free-Will. The State, for instance, is a product of freedom for freedom. The circle must be complete, and return into itself, as it does in President Lincoln's famous definition : a government of the People, by the People, for the People. In fact, what is the fundamental thought of self-government but the Nation's Free-Will willing the Nation's Free-Will? Such is the political application of the thought pertaining to the State; the ethical application, however, pertains to the individual, who is to will Free-Will as the highest aim of life.

Free-Will, therefore, is to have itself as content, or as that which is willed, then it is self-determined, complete, universal. Anything short of this content is inadequate, defective, wrong or sinful. In such a case man uses his freedom in some way detrimental to freedom, which thus becomes really self-destroying. It is well known that freedom may be the greatest boon or the greatest curse ; it is the boon only when it wills itself in a universal sense, not for one but for all. (See *Commentary on the Inferno* p. 77.) The truly ethical man comes by habit to will the universal Will.

The *Inferno* springs from Free-Will, but from

Free-Will which in some form assails Free-Will, and is thus negative to itself. For this reason it is a "disposition which Heaven wills not." (*Inf.* XI. 83). Man's own act is that which sends him to Hell, if he be sent thither, and which makes the gradation of the penalty. The lowest and worst form of the two chief infernal dispositions is called by Dante malice "whose end is injury." (*Inf.* XI. 23). Malice, therefore, wills actively to destroy another Free-Will, and is thus destroying itself, making a Hell for itself graded according to its deed. Incontinence is a lighter phase of the same thing, a sin of weakness and of want of self-control; it shows a Free-Will which passively suffers Free-Will to be determined by appetite and passion, and not by itself. Such are the two great ethical divisions of the *Inferno* and their purport; the thoughtful reader will have much use for them, though the abstruse form of their definition may cause his mind at first to rebound from the hard material.

But in Purgatory the contrast is emphatic. The Free-Will now wills Free-Will throughout its whole compass, yet is not strong enough to fulfill itself, to carry itself forth into the deed. Hence comes the purgatorial discipline till man be able to realize in life and conduct his own ethical ideal. Through habit and natural tendency he drops back into some lower phase of himself; then the penalty follows till the Will

itself become truly free, which is when it is strong enough to will its own content of Free-Will. Such is the purgatorial disposition; man now possesses "the Good of the Intellect," the willingness but not the Will complete; hence he accepts and even desires his punishment, which is the training to rid him of weakness and sin. The infernal disposition is to curse the penalty of guilt, and even the Divine Order which inflicts it, really for the man's own good. So the man through Free-Will makes the penalty his damnation or his salvation — his Inferno or his Purgatorio.

The content of Free-Will which the purgatorial person is to attain, is, as already stated, not only individual but institutional also, for it is Free-Will which has built all the Ethical Institutions of the world in order to establish Free-Will as the great outer Fact of Existence as well as the great inner Fact of the Soul.

The purgatorial struggle, accordingly, shows man willing the right and the good but unable to attain the same. The Will is perfect, but what is willed turns out imperfect, and even negative. Thus the form of the Will, as we may call it, does not correspond with the content thereof, which contradiction always arises when the individual wills something alien or hostile to his own Free-Will. This is the inner dissonance which comes of wrong, guilt, sin, and which the purga-



torial process seeks to overcome and to transform into harmony. The internal battle is the theme of this epic, and the triumph is the grand victory over self and selfishness. The struggle, the sorrow, the pain, are recognized by the soul in purgation to be necessary and a good, being the discipline unto perfection.

Dante found the process of purification from the Seven Sins in the medieval Church, and constructed his Mid-purgatory with its Seven Circles. To these he added a Pre-purgatory, which is essentially one Circle with several compartments, and a Post-purgatory which may also be called a Circle of purgation. Thus the total Purgatory has nine circles, the same number as the Inferno. But there is no city of Dis to divide the Sins of Purgatory into two divisions; on the contrary the poet makes its division "tripartite," in a double sense, since three is the holy number of his poem and of this *Cantica* especially, being suggestive of mediation.

The first class is a triad, and if we begin from the top of the Mountain, is made up of Lust, Gluttony and Avarice, in all of which the Will does not will "Blessedness" or "the Good Essence," (*Purg.* XVIII. 134) but some far lower content, some appetite or passion. This is what we may call the realm of personal sins, wherein the individual permits the baser element of himself to determine his Free-Will. The

second class is composed of one sin, Sloth, intermediate between the two triads, Sloth being the point of indifference between good and evil, hence a great vice to the positive spirit of goodness. The third class is a triad, Anger, Envy, Pride, in all of which "the ill of the neighbor is loved," hence we may call them the social sins. In them Free-Will goes forth and assails Free-Will in another, thus assailing its own essence.

But Mid-purgatory, or the system of the Seven Circles, does not end the purgatorial process, as is generally thought. There is, most emphatically, purgation in Post-purgatory, yes, in the heart of the Terrestrial Paradise, which is the scene of the grand, final purification of Dante himself. Hitherto he has participated in the purgatorial process along with others; now, he has it all to himself, and is put under penance for his special sin. What is this sin? In general, the sin against Beatrice, who brings it home to him sharply till he confesses, repents and receives pardon. Furthermore, this sin has two aspects, one of which is carnality; but the grand Post-purgatorial sin of Dante against Beatrice is the rejection of her spiritual nature, skepticism, that which is called in the *Inferno* Epicureanism, the denial of immortality, or the limit-transcending spirit of man. Such a sin is not found among the

Seven Sins of Mid-purgatory; it really denies the basis of the whole purgatorial process, which rests upon the idea that man can transcend his limitation of weakness and wrong; hence, such denial is the universal sin, being born of the intellect, not of the appetites and passions; veritably, it is the sin against Beatrice and all that she can mean in morals and in religion. Surely, when Dante is purged of this sin of sins, he is made ready to ascend to Heaven.

Such is, in general, the ethical organism of the total movement of the Purgatorio with its three divisions. We can see that it is constructed both in contrast and agreement with the ethical organism of the Inferno, being like it in parts and unlike it in parts. Both are made for each other yet against each other. Fruitful, indeed essential is the task of comparing these agreements and differences between the Inferno and the Purgatorio, those marvelous twins, a white and a black, born of one mother, yet fighting in her very womb like the ancient Hebrew twins, one to be damned and one to be blest forever.

The two schemes or systems of sins belonging to the Inferno and Purgatorio respectively, we shall now glance at in the form of a table which will show to the eye the differences and the agreements. The scheme of the Inferno, though it has but two general divisions, has a transitional

or intermediate sin, and can be set down as follows:

Lust,	{	Incontinence. (Personal Sins.)
Gluttony,		
Avarice,		
Anger.		
Epicureanism — Intermediate.		
Violence	{	Malice. (Social Sins.)
Fraud		

The scheme of the Purgatorio, arranged from the least to the lowest sin, presents itself thus:

Lust	{	Personal Sins.
Gluttony		
Avarice		
Sloth — Intermediate.		
Anger	{	Social Sins.
Envy		
Pride		

We are justified by the poet in giving to the last class in both schemes the name of social sins inasmuch as in the *Inferno* (XI. 24) he says of Malice that "it aggrieveth others" through injury; and in the *Purgatorio* (XVII. 113) the second triad of sins, Pride, Envy, Anger, spring from "the love of ill to the neighbor." The two divisions have thus a common characteristic, the wrong done to the neighbor.

Examining the two tables above, and noting

their differences, we may throw the discussion of them into the form of the following questions:

(1) Where in the Inferno are Pride and Envy punished?

(2) Where in the Purgatory are Violence and Fraud expiated?

(3) Where in the Inferno is Sloth punished?

(4) Where in the Purgatory is Epicureanism (Heresy) expiated?

(5) Why is Anger placed differently in the two schemes?

Then comes the consideration ~~of~~ the agreements between the two tables. The first three sins — Lust, Gluttony and Avarice — have the same names and are treated in the same order both in the Inferno and in the Purgatorio. The general classification of sins into personal and social, with an intermediate sin between the two divisions is the same in both schemes, though Epicureanism is more a personal than a social sin, and differs in kind from the other sins, being mainly of the intellect. The fourth sin, Anger, has the same name, but is differently classified, in the two schemes.

(1) We may now turn back and try to answer the first question: Where in the Inferno are Pride and Envy punished? Surely in no Circle by themselves. Let us take Pride. We find it expressly applied to Capaneus (*Inf.* XIV. 63.): “O Capaneus! in that thy Pride is not extin-

guished, thou art the more punished!" Yet Capaneus is paying the penalty of blasphemy, which must, therefore, have had its root in his proud disposition. Again, Farinata is portrayed as proud (*Inf. X.*) even beyond Pride, yet he is punished for his Epicureanism, for his denial of immortality. Finally Satan himself at the bottom of the Pit fell through Pride, and became a traitor to the Highest. Thus we find that in three different Circles of Hell Sixth, Seventh, Ninth, in which are punished respectively the Epicureans, the Violent, and the Traitors are people who have sinned through Pride.

What, then, is the ground for this difference in the treatment of Pride in the two Canticas? The hint has already been given: in the *Inferno* the man is punished for his life as realized in his conduct and deeds; in the *Purgatory* his disposition is to be purified so that he will transform his life and not do the wicked deed. Justice is the principle of the *Inferno*, which looks to the act more than to the motive; regeneration of the whole spiritual nature of the man is the principle of the *Purgatorio* which must, therefore, look to the springs of action rather than to the action itself.

Pride can be the source of many forms of the sinful deed; it led to treachery in the case of Satan, to blasphemy in the case of Capaneus, to epicureanism in the case of Farinata. We may

conceive it as the source of many other sins, of Anger and of Fraud, for instance. Pride indeed is the mother-sin which can bring forth all the sins of Hell. Hence it is that the purgatorial discipline grapples with Pride at the very start.

The same thought holds true of Envy. There is no special Circle for the envious in the *Inferno*, yet the envious are surely there, that is, the unrepentant envious ones, who persist in their sin. Envy also leads to different forms of sinful action; in Cain it led to fratricide, in Satan it led to treachery, for Satan had Envy as well as Pride (*Par.* IX. 129); one of them is in the *Caina*, and the other is in the *Judecca* of the *Inferno* for the guilty deed. Envy led *Sapia* to blasphemy (*Purg.* XIII. 122) but she repented, and hence she was found by Dante in Purgatory in the process of discipline for Envy; otherwise she would have been with *Capaneus* in the *Inferno*.

Still we must not say that in Hell the unrepented sinful deed alone is punished, and not the unrepented sinful disposition. Earth's justice, which is of the State, undoubtedly looks to the action, and not to the motive, except as a help to determine the character of the action. God's justice, which is that of the *Inferno*, also looks to the action, but must include the motive, the disposition. In fact this judgment according to the hearts of men rather than according to their

external behavior is just the emphatic thing in the Christian doctrine: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill. . . . But I say unto you, that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment" (*Matt. V. 21, 22*). Here is drawn most clearly the sin of the deed which is murder, in contrast with the sin of the disposition, which is Anger and may lead to murder. The old law laid the penalty on the outer deed, the new law lays it on the inner spirit of the man. Again we read in the same chapter: "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery already with her in his heart." And for that look, it may be added, he shall be in danger of Hell-fire.

Such was the new astonishing judgment, world-transforming, uttered in an obscure nook of Judea, in the old Hebrew and Roman time of formal justice. A new Heaven and a new Earth it was going to make, and, let it not be forgotten, a new Hell, too, and along with the same a new Purgatory, in which Pride and Envy and all the sins are to be expiated, though they never leave the heart and become a deed. It is the disposition which is to be purified, the spirit of the man, that he may transcend all the limitations of sin



and become perfect as a soul. Probably most of the cases undergoing the purgatorial process for Pride and Envy (see *Purg.* Canto XI. and XIV.) never permitted their sins to break forth into the overt act during life, still these people were proud and envious at heart, and must be purged.

Nor is it necessary to go beyond in order to find such a Purgatory. How many people are in a deadly wrestle with their own Pride and Envy in this life! They feel it, yet they put it down; they praise their rival in spite of Envy; they recognize the worth of the enemy with increased intensity because of their very dislike; they do deeds of humility when Pride is in open revolt, and makes them "tremble through every vein," as did the haughty Provenzano Salvani (*Purg.* XI. 138).

We have thus reached the principle of one of the chief differences between the ethical schemes of the Inferno and Purgatorio — which principle we have seen growing out of the very heart of Christianity. Hell punishes directly the deed, but includes the sinful disposition, which leads to the deed. This sinful disposition, however, is what must be cleansed from the soul by Purgatory, even if it may not have gone forth into the guilty act.

We may, therefore, answer the first question: Wherever in the Inferno Pride and Envy have led to the wicked deed, they are punished along

with that deed, which gives its name to the infernal Circle.

(2) The second question is, Where in the Purgatory are Violence and Fraud expiated? This is the counterpart to the question just discussed, as will be seen by a glance at the two schemes, one of which has no Pride and Envy, and the other no Violence and Fraud. Still the gap in each can easily be filled out from the other.

With the distinction already elaborated between sins of the disposition and sins of the deed, we can make short work of this second question. Violence and Fraud are sins of the deed, yet they spring from the sinful disposition. Any of the Seven Sins may lead the man into the guilt of Violence or Fraud. Already we have noted that the Devil did the grand act of treachery, which belongs to the realm of Fraud, through his proud and envious nature; also that Capaneus did the act of blasphemy through Pride. In like manner, Anger, Lust, Avarice, lead to Violence; the same vices too are the great source of all kinds of Fraud, which we behold punished in the ten circlets of the Eighth Circle of the Inferno. Lust makes the seducer, Avarice the pander and robber, Anger the murderer. The purification of the Seven Sins will root out the very possibility of Violence and Fraud, in fact will quite do away with the whole Inferno as the

realm of punishment for the wicked deed of which there has been no repentance.

We may, therefore, answer the second question: Wherever in the Purgatory is expiated the sinful disposition which has led to Violence and Fraud, there also these sins of the deed are in the process of expiation. In this arrangement Pre-purgatory too may have a part, when the act of repentance has been delayed.

We now pass to the second set of two questions which are also counterparts of each other to a certain degree. It will be noticed by a glance at the table that each scheme has an intermediate sin, lying between the two divisions. But this sin is different in each scheme, being Sloth in the one and Epicureanism in the other.

(3) The third question is: Where in the Inferno is Sloth punished? For its Circle a great search has been made through Hell by commentators old and new. The Italian word for Sloth is *accidia*; in the fifth Circle of the Inferno where the wrathful are punished we hear of those who lived carrying within their hearts a "slothful smoke" (*accidioso fummo*); from this adjective *accidioso* the old interpreters inferred that Sloth was here punished along with Wrath. But this opinion has been pretty generally abandoned by the later commentators, who put the Sullen into the mud of this fifth Circle, for excellent

reasons (see Witte, *Dante Forschungen*, Band II, 149, 156).

Sloth is the point of indifference in the doing of the good; the circle of the indifferent in the Inferno is found in the Vestibule. Here are "those who lived without praise or blame;" here too are the angels who were neither for nor against God in the grand conflict with Satan (*Inf. III. 39*). In Hell where the deed is punished, their penalty is the lightest, hence Justice there "disdains them;" but in Purgatory where the disposition is to be purified, Sloth is a far graver offense since virtue must be positive and active in doing the good. Hence we may account for the different positions of this sin in the two schemes.

The answer to the third question, therefore, is: Sloth, being almost a deedless sin, is put into the Vestibule of the Inferno, and does not really come under the judgment of Minos, Hell's Judge, for the slothful man can plead: I have done nothing. But note! in the Purgatory that is just the indictment against him, for which he must be put into the penitential discipline till he do something, especially when he is in the presence of the Devil, as he usually is.

(4) The next question is: Where in the Purgatory is Epicureanism expiated? This is commonly called Heresy, but the use of the word here is misleading, as it is generally given far

too wide a signification. To Dante there was one kind of Heresy punished in the burning tombs of the Sixth Circle of the Inferno. The denial of immortality, of the infinite nature of man was the supreme Heresy, which we have called Epicureanism, following the hints of the poet. "Those who make the soul die with the body" are the true heretics (*Inf.* X. 15); they deny the Future State, and hence must deny the basis of this poem. (For a fuller consideration of this subject see author's *Commentary on the Inferno*, p. 286).

But where is this sin expiated in Purgatory? For expiated it can be by the living man on due repentance. It is not to be found among the Seven Sins, all of which have their root in the disposition and the Will; but here is a sin which has its root in the Intellect, being a theoretic denial. Hence Witte, the great German Dantophile, among others says (*op. cit.*, p. 148) that it cannot be found in the Purgatory, and gives a reason why the poet has passed it over in silence.

Still the poet has not been silent about this sin, and well it is that he has not. As already indicated in another place, Epicureanism, skepticism, denial of the spiritual nature of man is the chief sin against Beatrice, with which she upbraids Dante in the Post-purgatory, where he expiates this sin, going through the stages of

contrition and confession in her presence till he obtains forgiveness. Dante at one time leaned toward the doctrine of Averrhoes, the great Arabian philosopher, who denied immortality; this was the "untrue way," on which he "pursued false images of Good" (*Purg.* XXX. 130). Thus we see that after the purified Will comes the Intellect, which is also to be purified of its sin, namely, doubt, negation, which really undermines the very foundation of the whole purgatorial process. Only after this final purgation can the man attain to what the scholastics called the piety of the Intellect.

The answer to the fourth question, therefore, is: Epicureanism, being wholly different in kind from the Seven Sins, is expiated in a different place and in a different manner from the latter, namely in Post-purgatory and in the presence of Beatrice, who represents the spiritual principle which has been violated. We may note, too, that in one sense Epicureanism is the greatest sin in Purgatory, being the universal one of thought, and that in another sense it is no sin at all, having in itself no deed and even no motive. The man who in the honest endeavor to reach truth, finds instead of it doubt and denial of truth, has done no sinful deed and has shown no sinful disposition, yet he has begotten the children of all sin, yea, has spawned the Devil himself. Thus Goethe gives

the genesis of Mephistopheles in *Faust*, the fiend is born of the everlasting No.

Sloth, accordingly, drops from its intermediate place in the Purgatorio to the first and least sinful place in the Inferno, while Epicureanism rises from its intermediate place in the Inferno to the last place in the Purgatorio. In all these shiftings of the two schemes the reader who thinks will not fail to find a groundwork of thought.

(5) The fifth question concerns the position of Anger, which is different in the two schemes. In that of the Purgatorio Sloth displaces it as the fourth sin and becomes the intermediate sin between the two great classes of sins, active neither in one way or the other. Thus the tripartite division of the Seven Sins, upon which Dante lays a good deal of stress (*Purg.* XVII.) is made complete.

But the chief difference is that the Anger of the Purgatorio is classified as a social sin, one that loves the ill of the neighbor, while the Anger of the Inferno lies outside of the City of Dis and ranks with the personal sins. We naturally surmise that the distinction already made between sins of the disposition and of the deed will also do service in the present difficulty. Purgatorial Anger may be regarded as the sinful temper which drives the man to violence against his neighbor, while infernal Anger may be re-

garded from the stand-point of the angry action itself, shown, for instance, in the mad doings of Filippo Argenti and his companions, smiting, biting, butting one another in Hell's mire. Perhaps, however, the necessity of adjusting properly the purgatorial scheme, which must have trinity and unity in it, was a sufficient reason to the mind of Dante for making the variation from the scheme of the *Inferno*. We must always take into account the systematic, aye, mathematic side of the poet's genius, which indeed springs from his transcendent constructive power even in its vagaries. A great architect always uses, and sometimes plays with numbers.

Such are the differences ; we may now consider the agreements between the two schemes. By looking back at the tables we note that the first three sins — Lust, Gluttony, Avarice — have the same names and follow the same order in both. But now we have to ask, Does the distinction already elaborated between sins of the disposition and sins of the deed hold still? Why should it be so suddenly dropped under conditions apparently the same as before? Thus the agreements demand explanation, as well as the variations in the two schemes. If the distinction is good, it ought to apply to all the sins of the two realms.

We can say that it does so apply. Lust, for instance, is a sinful disposition, which may have its outcome in a deed of sin like that of Francesca,



or may be suppressed and purged as in the case of Guido Guinicelli (*Purg.* XXVI 92). So also with Gluttony and Avarice. But mark! these are sins of appetite and passion, to which the man yields, and by which the Will allows itself to be determined; they are very different from the sins of Violence and Fraud, in which the Will positively acts and assails the neighbor. In the one case the deed follows the disposition *immediately*, since the former is the gratification of an appetite or passion in the man. In the other case the deed follows the disposition *mediately*, since the former, demands a positive act of Will against somebody outside, namely, the neighbor. The result is, that in the personal sins the disposition and the deed come together, and are one, while in the social sins the deed and the disposition are separated by a positive act of the Will which is the mean to unite the two sides. But personal sins have no such mean, or the merest shadow thereof.

Hence it is that in Lust, Gluttony and Avarice, being sins of weakness in which the Will is almost passive, the deed follows the disposition so closely that the two have one name, and are so nearly one thing that only an analysis can separate the two elements. We find, accordingly, that these three sins are designated in the same way, both in the Inferno and in the Purgatorio, though we may still regard them in the one from the

stand-point of the deed which is to be punished, and in the other from the stand-point of the disposition which is to be purified.

It is manifest that Dante reflected a good deal upon the relation between his *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*. He gives an abstract classification of the sins of both at corresponding places in the two *Canticas*. In the *Inferno* he looks backward and forward and presents his full ethical scheme in Canto XI., at the point of transition, which is the intermediary sin of Epicureanism; in the *Purgatorio*, he looks backward and forward and presents his full scheme in Canto XVII., the middle Canto of the *Cantica* and the point of transition at the intermediary sin of Sloth. Thus, we note a symmetry in the structure of these two parts of the *Divine Comedy*, corresponding to the symmetry in the thought of each. Homologous are the two *Canticas* in organism and in ethical purport, they must be so, in fact, since they are made to fit together. In all of which, we note the careful calculation of the poet, which certainly does not drag down but rather supports his inspiration.

So much for the relation between the ethical systems of the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, a subject which soon provokes questioning in the attentive reader, and which has attracted the notice of the best expositors (see Witte's essay on Dante's *Sündensystem*, in the *Jahrbuch* of the German

Dante Society, reprinted in the same author's *Dante-Forschungen*, Band II, with an appendix containing some notices of the literature of the subject. See also Dr. Harris' view in *The Spiritual Sense of the Divine Comedy*, pp. 61, 73, 76, etc.).

III. *Artistic*. It is generally conceded that the supreme artistic element of the *Divine Comedy* is its symbolism. Things of sense we see portrayed, and vividly portrayed; still the feeling is that they are introduced not for their own sake but for something beyond. In the *Inferno* Dante starts to climb a Mountain at the beginning, but he cannot climb it, he has to go in the opposite direction, down deeper and deeper into the earth. In the *Purgatorio*, on the other hand, he climbs the Mountain higher and higher to the very summit, and attains the Earthly Paradise. Is it not manifest that this Mountain has something more than a mere physical existence, and that the two actions of the man Dante in reference to it shadow forth the two spiritual conditions, Hell and Purgatory? In the one case he is driven back into a dark wood after attempting the ascent; in the second case he goes up till he enters a sun-lit forest, that of the primitive Eden.

Symbolism, therefore, we have to deal with in the *Purgatorio*, as was the case in the *Inferno*. Yet there is a difference between the two kinds.

The purgatorial symbol in its highest form must symbolize the total purgatorial process. It must hint the penalty of the sin and the acceptance of the penalty on part of the soul in purgation. On the contrary, the true infernal symbol shows the return of the deed to the guilty soul, which curses the penalty of its own action and curses the Divine Order in which such a penalty exists.

The purgatorial Mountain of itself hints the mediation between Earth and Heaven, Man and God, the finite and the infinite; it suggests the hard discipline of climbing, and also the happy attainment in the end. But the smallest things in the course of its ascent often show the same deep suggestiveness. The little rush (Canto I) which bends to the stroke of the waves, then recovers itself and lives, is a symbol of the total process of Purgatory. The apple tree of the Sixth Circle, which first lures the gluttons, then punishes them by withholding its fruit till they master their appetite, is a purgatorial symbol, suggesting the sin, the penalty and the expiation. Hundreds of mirrors, large and little, are these symbols, all of them reflecting more or less distinctly the grand purgatorial idea, yet forming together the one total movement. When Dante has passed up the three steps of Repentance and is received by the Angel (Canto IX), he has gone through but a small part of the real purgatorial process, yet that small part ideally contains

the whole of it and so is truly a symbol of this second realm.

Undoubtedly it requires some alertness of mind to see the whole in all these little parts. But Dante must be read in the spirit, otherwise he is nothing. True Symbolism demands a second sight which beholds not merely the particular thing but also the totality of which it is only a fragment.

No doubt there is a good deal of Allegory in the Purgatorio, but Allegory is, on the whole, very distinct from Symbolism, though the two approach each other on the borders. Allegory puts one particular thing for another particular thing, often with little or no connection between them; as when a star stands for a virtue in Canto First, four stars representing the four cardinal virtues. We may say that a star has light and shines like a virtue, but the suggestion is remote and a star may suggest a thousand other things as well as a virtue. Hence guess-work enters into all interpretations of Allegory.

What do the seven candlesticks mean in *Revelations* or in Canto Twenty-Ninth? What the seven bands of light streaming out after them? It is a puzzle simply; let every man make his own conjecture, or let him spend his time more profitably. But this is not Symbolism in its true sense; the symbol is a particular thing, doubtless, but it suggests the universal meaning,

at least to the mind which can grasp what is universal. The eyelids of the envious in the second Circle of Purgatory are sewed together so that they cannot see; no thinking reader ever fails to catch the symbolic purport of such a punishment. Envy blinds its victim, is the universal meaning, but how tame is this statement if compared with the vivid image above given! Now the true symbol must have the particular concrete image, and also the general thought completely interfused and blended together.

Then there is Personification or personified Allegory in which a person is put for some abstraction; for instance, Lucia stands for Grace, Rachel for Contemplation, Leah for active life. Here again the connection is more or less capricious, and conjecture holds sway. What abstraction does Matilda represent? But chiefly what does Beatrice stand for? Many volumes have been written upon these two subjects, on the whole with little fruit. Beatrice may sometimes mean Theology, Revelation, Heavenly Wisdom, etc.; but the highest view of her will not permit her to be taken merely as the embodiment of some fixed abstract notion. She has life, movement; she is in the process, if she be not the whole of it.

It cannot, therefore, be denied that Allegory as distinct from Symbolism is extensively employed in the Purgatorio. Especially in the

Terrestrial Paradise Dante follows his allegorical vein, which at times becomes wildly phantasmagoric, in imitation of *Revelations*. But the artistic truth in his poetry is Symbolism, which is also the soul of the Mythus.

In considering the Symbolism of the Purgatorio, we shall put it under three heads: first, the Symbolism of Nature, showing the transformed physical environment of the purgatorial man; second, the Symbolism of Spirit, expressing itself in the Angel; third, the symbolic transformation of the Garden of Eden, which runs through the entire Cantica, and which unites in itself both Symbolism of Nature and Symbolism of Spirit, showing the one in the physical environment of Paradise, and the other in the spiritual beings there.

1. It is manifest that Nature in the Purgatorio again undergoes a great transformation at the hands of the poet, yet different from that of the Inferno. The physical world is now made both to assist and to image the purgatorial process through which the soul is passing. The scenery suggests the purifying ordeal. The law of this change is that man makes his Purgatory, makes it anew though it be already made for him in the Divine Order. The spirit at the center of each Circle creates it all, even to the outermost environment; thus it is through him and his will; the penitent person calls forth from Nature a pen-

itorial side which envelops him and indeed mirrors his soul.

Free-Will is the foundation of Purgatory as it was the foundation of Inferno ; the man is in one or the other by virtue of his action. Both are in the Divine Scheme and he can take his choice, this freedom of choosing being also a part of the same Scheme. Man makes the Mountain here, though God has made it too ; his Free-Will is the source of Hell and also of the escape from Hell.

A glance at the purgatorial landscape in the first Canto will show the change from that of the Inferno. The sky now appears, the celestial world breaks into view, the sun is rising, light, which enters primordially into every attempt to symbolize spirit, illuminates Heaven and Earth, specially this purgatorial Mountain. Color follows light, and many harmonies arise for the hearing and the soul, both from Nature and the Supernatural. Darkness exists only for sleep, the repose of mind and body. There is no city corresponding to Dis ; purification must be personal, even though the vices be social. Springs, trees, rocks, all the varied terrestrial scenery we notice, the sea and the mountain are here, but water is not infernalized, as it is below, nor is the mountain.

The elements which played so important a part in the Inferno are now removed into the background. No storms, but pleasant breezes ; no



rain, hail, snow ; no intense cold like that of the ice-world below Malebolge. Fire quite vanishes ; only one quick intense application of it does Dante experience in the Circle of the lustful. Plant-life has its most important representative in the tree of Paradise, which will be considered later. But here we may note that the transfigured tree has a voice and speaks in the Circle of Gluttony, of which tree the infernal counterpart is found in the speaking and bleeding tree in the Wood of the Suicides.

In general, we see the setting of Nature attuned to the purgatorial mood ; the terrestrial and celestial landscapes hint the penance and the deliverance ; punitory and purificatory is the double suggestion in the objects of the physical world as shown here. That is, Nature is made over by the spirit of man into a symbol of Purgatory.

2. Such is now, in general, the appearance of inanimate Nature ; but in the realm of animate Nature, even more striking is the difference between the two Canticas. The demonology of the *Inferno* passes into the angelology of the *Purgatorio*. That is, the living being is changed to a spirit, and becomes the symbol of spirit. There are no monsters in the latter realm, such as are scattered all through Hell ; though Satan in the form of the Serpent appears once, he is immediately put to flight by the angels in charge of the new pre-purgatorial Paradise (*Canto VIII*).

The demon was evil, yet evil destroying evil, manifesting its own nullity ; but the angel shows the rise above evil and finitude, it represents the mastery of the sinful, negative element in man and in the world; thus it is a symbol of the spirit, whose function is to transcend limitations, outer and inner. The angel is light, is that flash which reaches from the finite to the infinite, and bridges the chasm between man and God. It is the mythical embodiment of the transition from the human to the divine; hence it appears everywhere along the course of this purgatorial journey. On the way between Earth and Heaven the angel always steps forth at significant turning-points.

Very important is the part of the angel henceforth in the *Divine Comedy*, in the *Paradiso* as well as in the *Purgatorio*. Manifold are the functions which it performs, but all have at bottom the one meaning, which, of course, must take a mythical shape to be seen by the people. The Mythos of the angel reaches far back in the history of the race, in fact ever since man conceived himself as a spiritual being and sought to figure the same to himself in some form. Dante follows the unfolding of the Hebrew and Christian Mythos upon this point, in its passage from the Orient to the Occident. Not the least of the reasons why the Bible has become the greatest of world-books is its angelology.

We can now see the reason why the grotesque, as observed in the *Inferno*, largely though not wholly falls away in the *Purgatorio*. The artistic spirit changes — must change; man reaching beyond himself, subduing his animal nature, and mastering his limitations, is not a grotesque being — is not self-undoing — but self-preserving. Not a negative but a positive entity he has become — not ridiculous, absurd, comic — but rational and universal. Greek mythology did not furnish the angel, but the demon; the sensuous is the adequate form of spirit to the Hellenic world, which is, therefore, demonized by the Christian poet Dante and put into the *Inferno*.

Still, we shall have to confess a falling-off in variety, comparing the *Inferno* to the *Purgatorio*. All angels are nearly the same in manifestation, while the demons take every possible shape of the animal commingled with the human shape. Are not the angels a little monotonous? Certainly the demons are an interesting set, — at least to the Teutonic imagination — and the civilized world has been pretty well Teutonized.

And even in the *Purgatorio* we shall find a thread of the *Inferno* woven into the fabric. All the instances of determent which are given in each of the Seven Circles of Mid-purgatory are infernal. These instances are ideal, that is, they are brought forward that the

sinner may contemplate the result of his persisting in sin, and this contemplation of Hell is a part of the purgatorial discipline. In other words, Art is employed in Purgatory, and this is at bottom its true function ; it is a catharsis, a purification, which comes to the soul from contemplating examples of good men and of bad, examples which lead toward the divine and deter from the diabolic. Both kinds of ideal instances, the ideal good and the ideal bad, are set up in this purgatorial art-gallery.

Another thread which is tinged with an infernal color, is the actual punishment of the people here. Their penalty corresponds to their sin, hence we see the same congruence between sin and punishment that we saw below in the Inferno. At this point a touch of the grotesque enters, for we behold evil undoing evil in the very form of the penalty. The thick smoke of the Circle of the Wrathful produces what the poet there calls the "darkness of Hell" (*buio d'inferno*), and the whole scene has a dash of Dante's grotesquery. Still the penitential side comes out strongly and overbears the infernal element ; these people use their punishment for salvation and not for damnation, and hence they cannot remain grotesque.

We must note the fact that the angels in Dante are a distinct order of beings, created by God and assigned to a given place in the grand hierarchy of spirits. Our poet's angelology culmi-

nates in the Primum Mobile, the ninth Heaven of the Paradiso, home of the nine angelic orders, according to the system falsely ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite. Angels are not disembodied human beings in Dante, or in the Semitic legend, or in the Christian religion properly, though certain Protestant sects have some such conception, holding that the departed spirits of good people become angels. This conception Mr. Baring-Gould (*Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*, p. 557) ascribes to druidism, and he declares that the well-known hymn, "I want to be an angel," is not Christian, not even Semitic, but is the utterance of an old Aryan myth, which thus springs up with startling vigor after a thousand years' sleep, and sings itself into new life in a Methodist camp-meeting. Such a song could not consistently be sung by Dante, whose angels are not human souls, however glorified, but belong to a totally distinct act of creation. All the souls of men in the *Divine Comedy* are still waiting for resurrection and judgment, in form at least, though it would seem that the last judgment at the end of the world can hardly do more than confirm Dante's Judgment as recorded in this book.

But it is strange how indestructible is the Mythus; centuries after centuries it slumbers on in the hearts of the people, till some day it wakes up and becomes their newest song, and possibly

their newest religion. Thus Protestantism is in part at least a reaction to ancient Celtic and Teutonic Heathenism which still darkly and unconsciously survives in the faith and in the folk-lore of the more Northern nations of Europe. The Reformation, perhaps like all revolutions, was a going both ways, backwards as well as forwards, was but a new phase of that old, old conflict between the Teutons and the Romans. And, it may be added, those two warlike queens, Teutonia and Roma, are to-day still fighting the same old battle, veritable amazons, whose shapes we first catch a glimpse of in the remotest historical twilight, wrestling for supremacy and repeating the struggle under new forms through ages, sometimes on the sunny fields of Italy and sometimes in the dark forests and bogs of Germany.

Still it would be hazardous to assert that no trace can be found in Dante of the conception of man becoming an angel after death. "Do you not perceive that we (mankind or Christians) are worms born to form the *angelic butterfly*?" (Purg. X., 125). We have elsewhere unfolded the Teutonic element which strongly colors Dante's poem throughout (See *Com. on Inf.*, p. 166); he had in him, instinctively and unconsciously for the most part, many traces of the spirit and the folk-lore of his distant Northern ancestry, Gothic or Lombard; indeed, his fundamental artistic character is Gothic. I do not recollect that he

calls Beatrice an angel anywhere, still the conception of her character and function is largely the conception of an angelic character and function. Perchance the present writer betrayed both his race and his inherited belief when he unconsciously called Beatrice an angel in a former book (*Com. on Inf.*, p. 200).

Finally, when we have done our best with the angel, we have to confess that there is, in external form at least, an element of the monstrous in it, being a commingled shape of man and bird, not bestial surely, still with its wings a monstrosity in Nature, and hence on this side touching the demon, which can also have wings.

3. The Symbolism of the Purgatorio seizes hold of the Garden of Eden, the original Mythos of Paradise, and works it over in various ways and in different places of the *Cantica*. In fact, out of that primitive Garden have sprung two Paradises, terrestrial and celestial, both of which we shall find to be present in the purgatorial discipline, the first really, the second ideally. That old Hebrew tale of Eden had a prodigious fascination for the mind of Dante, who has transformed it both on Earth and in Heaven.

The idea of Paradise runs through all three divisions of Dante's Purgatory. In the first division, or Pre-purgatory, it is at the end (*Canto VIII*), when the day is done and the night is setting in; two angels come down for

guardianship against Satan, who presently appears and is put to flight. Thus the old drama of Eden is acted over again with the opposite conclusion; the Serpent is not victorious this time. In such manner the Christian poet very significantly transforms the ancient Hebrew legend; man is not now the victim, but the Devil is.

In Mid-purgatory there is an element of celestial Paradise in every circle. The ideal examples which are set forth as the great incitement to the good are paradisaical in character, Christ, Mary, and even heathen Trajan for instance. It is a very important part of the purificatory discipline that those undergoing the same contemplate these celestial examples of goodness. Then, too, when the purgatorial process is completed by the individual, the angel appears and leads him up higher; this angel is also a celestial personage.

In Post-purgatory the external setting of Nature is supposed to be that of the original Garden of Eden, from which Adam and Eve were expelled. But in it is day, while in the pre-purgatorial Eden there was night. In it is the angel too, and the beatified human soul Beatrice; but chiefly in it is the penitent man, Dante, who has here to pass through his main purgation. We shall speak more fully of this Terrestrial Paradise when we come to it hereafter; at present we can merely say that our poet shows his transcendent



hope and optimism by making man gain and not lose Paradise.

It has been often observed that Dante personally participates in his own Purgatory. He is one of the characters under discipline, and is put into the same by himself. His spirit throughout says: I deserve all this punishment; let it fall upon me that I be freed of my shortcomings. The purgatorial mood he shows throughout; but especially in the first and last Circles, those of Pride and of Lust, he makes plain his participation. A sort of inner biography we can trace in the book, an idealized history of a soul's struggle with its ethical limitations. But the chief part of his penitential journey is found in the Terrestrial Paradise, where Beatrice brings home to him his guilt, and where we hear his confession, sorrow and forgiveness. In fact, this portion of the *Cantica* may be called spiritually Dante's Purgatory, in which he does penance for his sin against Beatrice, greatest of all his sins. The Terrestrial Paradise is the scene of the poet's sharpest self-condemnation as well as atonement and spiritual restoration, wherein we apparently have the right to see what Dante means by Eden, by the Paradise which is on Earth.

To this purgatorial temper of the poet the style marvelously corresponds. We feel a tenderness in his words and a sufferance in his speech, in spite of some passionate outbursts, and a disci-

pline in his tongue, which shows the man training not only himself but his utterance to accept the hard penalty of exile and misfortune, and to turn them into a means of chastening his diabolized language. To be sure we miss the mighty demonic frenzy, unique of its kind, which possessed him in writing the *Inferno*. The amazing audacity and deviltry, shown in the very style of the previous *Cantica*, are of necessity now dropped, and a mild, self-suppressing, penitential note is heard in sweet undertones winding through all the music of *Purgatory*.

The *Cantica* must have been written at a period when the poet had accepted the ill-fortune of his life with its exile, poverty and crushed hopes; it is, indeed, his spiritual history of such acceptance. The book bears the marks of a deep and long inner trial, with the final mastery over every form of fate, external and internal. Experience is woven into the very soul of this writing; it is more than probable that the relief came only through utterance. Composition was the poet's *Purgatory*, as all high authorship must be to a certain extent; the godlike word is written down in the discipline of suffering, from which it alone brings to the writer enfranchisement.

### *PRE-PURGATORY.*

The first nine Cantos are a description of what is usually called Pre-purgatory, which is not a Vestibule, like the plain of the Neutrals in the Inferno, but is an integral part of the present Cantica with its own Vestibule, as we shall see. It starts with the exit from Hell and extends to the Circle of Pride, to the beginning of the Seven Circles or Mid-purgatory.

If we take a glance into its spiritual movement, we find that this lies mainly between two important symbolic acts done to Dante; he is girdled with a rush by Virgil (I. 133), and he is marked on the forehead with the Seven P's by the Angel. The rush, along with his "tearful cheeks," and that "hue which Hell had concealed" indicates the purgatorial disposition; he wills to repent, which is the starting point of the grand purification. The Seven P's graved  
(95)

on his forehead (IX. 112) indicate that he has come to the consciousness of Sin, which is, as it were, cut into his brain. When he knows his guilt fully and feels it deeply, he can begin the purgatorial process.

The great characteristic of this Pre-purgatory is that it is the place for those who have delayed while living their preparation for the future state, yet have repented at the last moment, just soon enough to escape the gate of Inferno. Repentance, the very latest repentance—even that of the murderer between the rise and fall of the executioner's axe—brings forth reconciliation, heaven. Still this delay is not without its penalty; those who have done their duty in season are not on the same footing with those who have been negligent. It is a sad mark of the unregenerate temper to procrastinate, to put off the great spiritual duty which is really the first and most pressing, to some other time, when we are not so busy with finite matters. Death gives us a stare in the face and then we recollect. Now various forms of this procrastination are brought together here in the Pre-purgatory.

It is manifest that the place is to a degree retributive. As these people have delayed while living, so now they get their own deed in being delayed on the way of purification. They are put into their environment, which is that of waiting for the passage, waiting sometimes hundreds

of years for the train. Surely there is some punishment in that, especially for busy people, so busy that they could not attend to the eternal matter in time. Such is the sole penalty here, a negative, passive one; later, in the Seven Circles, these people will get a taste of brimstone, which, however, will be purifying.

In certain details of its structure, Pre-purgatory suggests Purgatory Proper (the Seven Circles), being the prelude thereto, with flashes of future thoughts darting through, and with motives taken from the main music which follows. There are not here Seven Circles strongly marked, yet there are seven divisions lightly indicated, presentiments, we may say, of what is coming. In the first division is Casella, who sings a strain of sensuous love, in emphatic contrast to the main burden of this purgatorial song, hinting the last Circle above in Purgatory, and the first Circle below in Hell. Again, Belacqua is surely an instance of Sloth, which is the middle one of the Seven Circles, as it is here somewhere in the middle of Pre-purgatory, though not exactly. Still further, Pride is doubtless to be seen in the Valley of the Princes (Canto VII.); especially we witness it in Sordello, and have in his case a foretaste of the first Circle of Purgatory just beyond.

Thus we observe Pride, Sloth and sensuous Love, the beginning, middle and end of the sys-

tem of the Seven Circles, appearing here in the Pre-purgatory. We should also note that their order is not the purgatorial, but the reverse ; that is, they have the order of the Inferno, which begins with sensuous Love, whereas Mid-purgatory ends with the same. Thus the Pre-purgatory shares in the structure of the two portions of the *Divine Comedy* between which it lies. We may reasonably say we find three of the seven capital Sins suggested here ; the other four, Envy, Anger, Avarice, Gluttony, seem not even to be hinted. The poet does not tell us what made the life of Buonconte guilty, nor does he say what were the "horrible sins" of Manfred, nor to what part of Mid-purgatory the latter will go when he has served out his time of delay. Certainly Belacqua was slothful and we know pretty well to what Circle above he will be remanded for discipline ; but nothing of this sort can we affirm of Jacopo del Fano, or Lady Pia, who are also in the present department of sin.

If not too precise about the dividing line, we may count seven divisions of Pre-purgatory with a vestibule, which number suggests the Seven Circles above and the corresponding Sins. Still we do not expect a rigid conformity, but, as already indicated, merely a suggestion or presentiment of what is to come. These divisions it is worth while to draw out a little in advance.

The Vestibule begins with Dante's exit from the Inferno and extends to the point where he meets the souls coming from the Earth, among whom is Casella. This is specially Cato's realm (*balia*, *bailiwick*), in which Dante obtains the pliant rush, the purgatorial temper, which yields to the stroke of misfortune and punishment, then recovers itself and is saved. Cato's stern disposition never plucked the rush evidently, and hence he never got beyond this Vestibule, though he can point out where the rush grows.

The first division is the interview between Dante and Casella, the latter singing the former's song of sensuous Love (not sensual), which lulls the company in a sweet spell of passion, indicating the first kind of spiritual delay, gratification of the senses. From this procrastination they are roused by Cato and sent forward with a sharp sting on their journey.

The second division is the passage through a plain from Casella to Manfred, "a thousand paces," where the two poets reach those who died excommunicate from the Church, but repentant at the last moment, standing just at the foot of the purgatorial Mountain. Here is the longest stay and the hardest case of all; hence the guilty are put at the foot of the ascent, having hardly yet started. Which of the Seven Sins led them into this state of contumacy is not mentioned; we cannot tell, therefore, to what

Circle or Circles above they are destined — perhaps to various ones.

The third division begins the ascent of the Mountain through a gate or entrance in the wall of rock to a terrace (*balzo*). Here the landscape forecasts the landscape of the purgatorial Circles. At this point Belacqua, the slothful, is found sitting, not toiling upwards, saying, “What’s the good of it?”

The ~~Earth~~ fourth division passes from the terrace to the mountain side, on which a troop of people is singing and struggling—those who, being suddenly overtaken by a violent death, have repented at the last moment. Three cases are named by Dante, but without any hint of their special sin.

The fifth division consists of one important soul, Sordello, who “stands alone and looks at us,” whom they find on the mountain side, after leaving the previous group behind. “Haughty and disdainful” was his look, evidently the man of Pride, and also one of the late repentants, but the manner of his death is not given. He joins the travelers, shows many courtesies, and being a poet, becomes a guide through a part of this realm.

The sixth division is found in the Valley of the Princes, down into which Dante and Virgil look from an eminence, while Sordello points out the great ones of the earth, who, surrounded with



pomp and splendor, deferred the act of repentance. The poet decorates this regal abode with all the riches of nature, giving to it color, fragrance, music.

The seventh division this same place becomes when the poets descend into it, and night draws on, and two angels appear with swords aflame. Here we enter the pre-purgatorial Paradise, which corresponds to the terrestrial Paradise ending Purgatory. Dante has a dream which vaguely forecasts the future, and he is borne in his sleep by Lucia (Grace illuminant) to the Gate of Mid-purgatory.

In the middle of Canto Ninth the process of repentance begins, to which those in Pre-purgatory have not yet come. They have simply the will to repent, the purgatorial temper; they have not the full consciousness of their sin till the Angel has graved upon their foreheads the seven P's. Herewith we have the introduction or Vestibule to the realm of the Seven Circles, which Dante now enters. Mark again, this process of Repentance, this consciousness of sin stamped upon the soul in the transition from Pre-purgatory to Mid-purgatory. Dante, girdled with that emblematic rush of his, passes through rapidly.

The direction of the two poets is in the main from East to West, and up the Mountain. The Sun is rising, and they occupy just one day in Pre-purgatory. They note the hour of the day

several times by looking up at the Sun, and also mark the period of the year by stating his place in the zodiac. Thus a total view of the cosmical universe is suggested, in the presence of which the travelers are making the journey.

The poetic artifice — such we may call it — of drawing strongly attention to Dante, and of bringing out the character of the spirits in conversation is peculiar. Dante's body is with him and hence casts a shadow which surprises these ghosts. When they find out that he is to return to the sensible world, they eagerly send word to their friends and relatives for more hearty and persistent prayers, that these may shorten their purgatorial delay. This idea that the living are to intercede for the dead who are in Purgatory, has under it supremely the thought of charity, which is not to end with life but is eternal. *Nil nisi bonum de mortuis* even the heathen could say, but the Christian is not only to speak what is good but to do what is good and helpful for those who have departed.

And that body which Dante takes with him from the sensible into the supersensible realm is veritably a symbol, hinting what the poet does with all Nature; he transfigures it, but never loses it, or makes it vanish into the pure idea even in the realm of shades. The corporeal part of the man passes over into the incorporeal realm where it casts a shadow; what is that but the

ideal element of the poem itself? And the surprise of the ghosts there is only equal to the disbelief of the living here in any such miracle of poetry.

On the whole the various stages in Pre-purgatory have little or no inherent organic connection. A panoramic view of some who have delayed, hardly an exhaustive survey; not by any means has it the exact construction which we find in the coming Seven Circles. It is an overture, with snatches of melody from the later work. A certain sameness runs through it, oft repeated with little variations; it has not Dante's brevity and intense concentration.

Among the interesting parts of Pre-purgatory, that in which Sordello figures stands pre-eminent. He along with Virgil and Dante enacts a little drama, full of movement, with play of features and gestures, very Italian, showing proud reserve yet also the Southern outburst of emotion, especially at his two-fold recognition of Virgil, first as his Mantuan countryman, then as the famous Latin poet. Great literary skill one will note in the proper interweaving of the dialogues and the descriptions. Also one should observe that the three poets here in Pre-purgatory correspond to the three poets in Mid-purgatory, where Statius appears and joins the company, passing with Dante and Virgil to the post-purgatorial Paradise, as Sordello here goes with them to the pre-purgatorial Paradise. This is one of those

homologies of structure, which are a characteristic of the *Divine Comedy*, and specially of the *Purgatorio*. Sordello and Statius are homologues, to which we may add the example of the heathen singers from the *Inferno* (Canto IV.). Significant is it that all these poets are moving toward a Paradise, an ideal realm of some kind; even in Hell they go forward "toward the light" in which is "the noble Castle." But the supreme movement is that of Dante himself, who will reach the Celestial Paradise, leaving behind him all the other poets somewhere in their lesser Paradises, through which, however, he has to pass along with them.

*Canto First.* There are evidently two branches leading to the main purgatorial road up the Mountain. One of these branches is followed out in the present Canto, the other is traced in the next Canto; hence the first two Cantos — as is the case in the *Inferno* — are in the main introductory to the whole *Cantica*.

The first branch or path starts from the exit or back-door of the *Inferno*, out of which Dante and Virgil have just stepped, and is the line along which they move in the present Canto. The second branch running not from Hell, but from Earth somewhere, will be considered in the second Canto.

The poet has emerged from the Lower Regions, with the soot (*sucidume*) still on his cheeks, and

is now going to continue his journey "in the little ship of my genius," singing on the way "of that second realm," which promises to be "better water" for poetic sailing than the storms, hail and ice of the infernal world. This first Canto has Dante's transition from below to the first stage of Pre-purgatory, whose vestibule is here indicated. The subject-matter can be surveyed under three heads—the Introduction to this Sphere, the Man in it and his lesson, the Movement out of it when it has given its discipline, indicated in the landscape and in certain rites.

I. After casting a momentary glance back at what he has left behind, the poet states definitely his theme: "I shall sing of that second realm where the human spirit purifies itself (note the reflexive form) and becomes worthy of ascending to Heaven." Thus the place and thought of Purgatory are hinted, it is the middle one of the three realms, mediatorial, mediating the Paradiso, to which the individual is to ascend through the purgatorial process. Purification of the spirit is now Dante's message; shall we not say, his most important message?

A short invocation of the Muse also we hear at this point. Moreover Dante's Muses are heathen, though he calls them "sacred." It is plain that he regarded the antique world, with its art and poetry, as the giver of form; even at the beginning of the Paradiso he invokes Apollo. And

he is right ; without the aid of the Greek Muses he could do nothing. Virgil, product mainly of Hellenic culture, is still his guide, and Caliope must again rise with that note of hers which overwhelmed those rivals, the wretched daughters of Pierius, and actually transformed them into chattering magpies. Such, perchance, is to be the effect of this new purgatorial song upon contemporary poets.

Next we behold the landscape, wholly celestial at this point; we shall drop to the terrestrial phase of it in the last part of the Canto. Coming out of the pit, Dante must look up and see the sky, which he has not seen for a good while. A sad deprivation for him specially; the Sun and the Stars were the consolation of his exile. Mark how his moral greatness couples itself with the heavenly bodies in his letter to a Florentine friend concerning his return from banishment: "But if I cannot honorably enter Florence, Florence I never shall enter. What? Can I not everywhere look up at the Sun and the Stars?" Hell indeed was just their absence; but now they are again present, and he will adjust himself to them throughout the rest of his journey, since they constitute the chief mechanism of that wonderful clock of his, on which he reads his time and place in the universe.

One stroke gives hue to the landscape and tone to the new realm: "Sweet color of oriental

sapphire," blue, symbol of Hope. That line, *Dolce color d'oriental zaffiro*, is truly the prelude of the Purgatory, both in music and suggestiveness. We must note, too, this hue is "gathering itself in the serene aspect of the air," which air is "pure to the first sphere" above, and hints to the religious soul the celestial virtue of Faith. Then the poet beholds "the beautiful planet," Venus, here suggesting divine Love and "making all the Orient laugh." After looking at Venus, he turns to the right-hand, toward the south pole, since he has hitherto glanced northward; there in the southern Hemisphere he sees four stars, as a part of the heavenly landscape, real stars unquestionably, yet suggesting the four cardinal virtues — Justice, Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude. By these four stars the poet certainly means the Southern Cross, of which he must have known in some way; he seems also to allude to the fact that these stars were once visible in the Northern Hemisphere.

Taking this celestial scenery as a whole, we are made to feel and see the lofty setting of Nature for the new thought and the new poem. A phase of the physical universe is summoned into our presence, and we look at its splendor. But this is not all; the symbolic suggestion we must grasp along with the external image, as it runs through the whole Purgatory, indeed through the entire *Divine Comedy*. This suggestion is here the

three theological and the four cardinal virtues, showing a totality of the good, both sacred and secular. It is well that Dante beholds such a Heaven above him at the beginning of his purgatorial career; what else has he to do but to attain it?

Nature is not now demonized as we saw her in the *Inferno* below, she is transfigured into a celestial garment for the virtues. Note again the appearance of Faith, that transparent look of the air, "pure to the first sphere," and furnishing the very breath of spiritual life. Then this air of Faith is transfused through and through with Hope, "the sapphire oriental" of the skies, and is furthermore pierced and illuminated with the rays of the planet of Love.

II. When Dante had turned his gaze from the four Stars to look again in the other direction, behold! Near him is standing an old man, with a countenance full of reverence, with a long beard and hair mingled with white, "of which a double list fell down to his breast." The living embodiment he is of those four Stars, "whose rays so fringed his face with light" that he seemed the Sun. Who is it? Roman Cato, born 95, died 46 A. C., usually known as Cato of Utica, here the warder of Christian Purgatory.

A genuine surprise to the reader is this, from which he never wholly recovers. Cato, as a good Heathen, ought to be in Limbo, but he was



a suicide, so he ought to be further down, in the second Round of the seventh Circle of the Inferno. Nay, he was an enemy of Cæsar and of the Empire—why should he not be with Brutus and Cassius at the bottom of the pit crunched in the mouth of Satan himself? Thus Cato at the first glance seems to compass Dante's Hell, beginning, middle and end; why then is he here, even with the scepter of authority?

In the first place, we have repeatedly noticed a strong inner protest in the soul of Dante against damning the good Heathen; we have also observed a decided trend in him toward making Hell remedial in spite of his theological bias. Now he dashes over all the limits of the dogma and of himself, and makes a bold break for freedom, of which he deems Cato to be just the typical example, for Dante too "goes seeking liberty which is so dear, as the man who refuses life for it knows." Thus our poet takes ancient Cato out of Inferno and gives him a place of authority in Purgatory.

In the second place we can trace a deep sympathy with Cato's character in the poet, who was also an old Roman as well a good Christian. Cato possessed an enormous strength of the moral Ego, so that life and the world were naught in comparison. This was the real liberty for which he slew himself, a subjective liberty which could not find in the Roman State under

Cæsar any correspondence with itself. Hence Dante could most deeply sympathize with his character and moral nature, though the political views of two men be quite opposite. Dante also lost his political ideal like Cato, still he did not commit suicide, but wrote this *Divine Comedy* instead, and in that way realized his liberty.

Great was the admiration of the Florentine poet for that old Roman. In his *De Monarchia* (II. 5) he speaks of "the indescribable sacrifice of Marcus Cato, who, to kindle the love of freedom in the world, showed how great was the value of freedom, since he was more willing to quit life as a free man than to remain in the same without freedom." Nothing less than a defense of Cato's suicide is this, which Dante regards as a "sacrifice," and a great example to the human race—not like the cases in the *Inferno*, in which self-destruction resulted from selfishness, or folly, or an unwillingness to meet the stroke of Fate. But Cato's is the liberty-seeking, limit-transcending spirit which joyfully shuffles off its finite existence to be truly free.

No doubt Cato has made a strong impression upon the world by his death, which is the most frequently cited instance of justifiable suicide. Must not the question have come up to Dante: Is self-murder ever a duty? Law, Ethics, Religion give in the main but one answer; still we think of the

lonely exile, after years of disappointment, pondering the great Roman examples of suicide, and admiring though not following that of Cato. But the culmination is reached in the *Convito* (IV. 28) where Dante exclaims: "What earthly man is more worthy to signify God than Cato? Surely none." Which is indeed about the highest possible position in the *Paradiso*, to which, Dante implies in the present Canto (l. 75), Cato will ascend at the Judgment Day. Then there will be at least another Heathen in Heaven. The same thought of Cato's standing for deity is brought out in the allegory concerning his wife Marcia, who returned to him in his old age—"Whereby is signified the return of the noble soul to God at the beginning of old age" (*Convito* IV. 28). Veritably Cato must have slain himself by divine inspiration. Goethe states that he freed himself of his thoughts of self-slaughter by writing *Werther*; he saved himself by making his hero slay himself. Possibly Dante obtained relief in a similar way — by lauding suicide and thereby not committing it. Shakespeare, another world-poet, makes Hamlet liberate himself from the idea of self-murder by soliloquizing upon it in a favorable manner. Thus the word may relieve the burdened soul of the deed, which becomes heroic by not doing.

For Cato's official position here the hint is found in the *Æneid* (VIII. 670), which describes,

on the shield of Vulcan, the pious apart and Cato administering justice: *Secretosque pios: his dantem jura Catonem*. Already in the Roman time, Cato had found a place in the super-sensible world, and Dante has inherited the thought.

When Cato sees the two men come out of the hole and stand in his domain, it is no wonder that he cries out: Who are ye? And how did you get here? "Are the laws of the abyss so broken?" This is the very question of the legal Roman. Yet those laws had been broken in Cato's case, as he afterward tells; Dante himself has a certain tendency to break them, and has transcended them in his present journey.

Virgil's answer to Cato's questions is quite full and very courteous, in decided contrast to his curt response to the demonic Charon at the entrance of the Inferno. The divine origin of the journey is re-affirmed, quite as we heard it in the second Canto of the previous Cantica. Such is the providential side: "I came not of myself; a Lady descended from Heaven." Then there is the individual side: this man Dante, through his folly, was nigh to perishing, and for his salvation "there was no other road but this on which I have been sent." He must have the experience of evil before death; "he goes seeking liberty," he is struggling to transcend his limits of selfishness and sin, and so be truly free.

Note, too, that Virgil says "the eternal edicts are not broken by us, for this man lives, and *Minos does not bind me*"—which seems to imply that all those in Limbo can get out, since they are not under the judgment of Minos. More and more do the walls of Hell seem to be shattered by the progress of the poem, which is evidently Dante's progress. Whereupon Cato gives a few instructions in regard to certain necessary rites, and then vanishes. For it may be affirmed that Dante with his new spirit of freedom is quite beyond the old Roman, and is now in no danger of committing suicide.

III. The last part of the Canto has quite a full description of the terrestrial landscape of this portion of Purgatory, in contrast to the celestial landscape already given in the first part. But this outer frame-work of Nature is only the setting for the symbolic rite, which again suggests the spiritual act preparatory to the purgatorial process now to be entered upon.

Very delightful are all these Dantean flashes of the surrounding scenery. "The dawn was conquering the hour of morn," and by the light "I recognized afar the trembling of the sea"—the poet recognized the sparkle of his own Mediterranean. "Through a solitary plain" they pass till "where the dew struggles with the sun" and where they find some "scattered grass," very refreshing to the eyesight after the

infernal trip, on which no green herbage was to be seen, unless the "green enamel" of Limbo was a grassy plot. Finally they come "to the desert shore" where the wave beats upon "this little island" and there find the pliant rush growing "above the soft mud" where "no other plant can have life, inasmuch as it yields not to blows" of the waves.

With this rush so pliant Dante is girdled by his guide, of which the meaning is that he must now bend that rigid proud Spirit of his to the purgatorial strokes. Humility, say the commentators, is typified in the rush; yes, that and something more. It suggests the yielding which accepts discipline, it indicates the disposition which renders Purgatory a great progress and a blessing. Hell refuses to take the training of pain and punishment; the rush yields to the punitive blows. Such is the one rite hinting the spirit which is ready and willing to undergo the purificatory process; the other rite is the washing the cheeks clean of infernal soot and tears in the purgatorial dew.

Thus we behold the sea, the island, the mountain, and the sun over all. But at the same time we feel something else, which is the spiritual suggestion. Nature is transformed along with man; she now becomes purgatorial, as she was before infernal. Still the grotesque sticks deep in Dante, he cannot avoid it altogether in

Purgatory or Paradise. A dash of it we have in the present Canto: "My leader seized hold of me, and with words and hands and signs made reverent for me the legs and brow" at the appearance of Cato.

*Canto Second.* In the present Canto we have the passage from Europe and Christendom, directly to Purgatory, by the soul after death. In the previous Canto we beheld the passage to the same place from the Inferno by Dante, the living man, accompanied by his guide. Two ways, therefore, lead to Purgatory, from Earth and from Hell. Nor should we miss the suggestion which lies in the fact: Dante has a road out of the infernal region to the purgatorial, which road a departed spirit and a living person have traveled.

The Canto opens with a glance at the Sun as the grand new appearance of light which has been lost since the moment he became "silent" in the first Canto of the Inferno. Out of his place in the skies the Sun tells to the poet the time of day and the time of the year. All is declared from the Heavens, in whose presence, physical as well as spiritual, the purgatorial journey below is to take place. Such is Dante's clock, truly the clock of the Universe, on which he reads not only a sensible, but a supersensible time.

It is a sunrise in spring, Dante is at a given

spot on the Earth, which he proceeds to consider in its totality, with its two antipodal places, the mountain of Purgatory and Jerusalem, meeting in a common horizon which is designated by the Ganges eastward. Then he looks up at the Sun which is likewise at a given point in the Zodiac. Thus the relation between Heaven and Earth is marked; thus too man is shown both in his terrestrial and celestial relations.

The Canto has two leading facts in it: the transition from Earth to Purgatory, and the coming together of the two sets of people — Dante and Virgil on the one hand, and the boat-load of souls on the other.

I. An angel gradually rises into view, steering a boat "so swift and light that the water swallowed none of it." This boat was filled with souls which were shipped for Purgatory at the mouth of the Tiber. White is the angel, with white wings; he is the ferryman here, corresponding to Charon in the *Inferno*, who was, however, a demon. When he had deposited his load he shot off again, as swift as he came, evidently for another load.

Here we touch upon an important mythical element of the *Purgatorio* in contrast with the *Inferno*. The angel is sent of God, and always appears at any great transition of the human soul into a higher sphere. Hence we shall now have a system of angelology, the purgatorial pro-



cess being a continued ascent from one stage to another. Just at present the entrance to Purgatory is signalized by an angelic appearance, being the first great rise out of finite terrestrial conditions. In the *Inferno* the corresponding fact is demonology, in which the animal is demonized to show man sunk into beasthood. Here we have a touch of the animal also, which is called "the bird divine" on account of its wings and its flight upward. It is not grotesque, it represents not evil undoing itself and still remaining evil, but evil transformed and transcended. When man reaches above his sinful finite nature, and asserts his infinite nature, then the angel appears, the representative of divinity. Not the demonic, but the angelic is the mythical trait of Purgatory and also of Paradise.

The poet is careful to mark the new fact, "Henceforward thou shalt see such officials." Virgil enforces the act of worship in the presence of "God's messenger;" then, indeed, is reverence in its true place, when the divine appears unto mortals. "Bend the knees and fold the hands;" which form of adoration is not to be omitted hereafter; body must be put in harmony with spirit.

The appearance of the angel is usually accompanied by song, which is a still deeper harmony than gesture. Music must always be a part of the divine rite in which the individual is made

concordant with the universal. Hence it is that the souls which have just arrived by the boat are singing a psalm of thanksgiving for their deliverance, which is suggested by the flight of Israel from Egypt. At the sign of the cross, "they all threw themselves upon the shore," and their purgatorial discipline begins.

The passage of the psalm (114) here cited: *In exitu Israel de Ægypto*, is celebrated in Dantean literature for the comment which Dante himself has written upon it in the oft-cited letter to Can Grande, in which he speaks of its having four possible senses, literal, allegorical, moral and anagogical. Whatever we may say to these distinctions, we know that Dante had a spiritual side to his sensuous imagery. Such is the religious consciousness of all times, as we see by the history of the above psalm. The flight of Israel from Egypt was in the first place a fact, an actual salvation of a people. Then David takes it to signify the individual redemption from sin. Finally the Church has taken it and used it in a number of ways, one of which is this of Dante, the redemption of the soul from flesh, and the passage to man's eternal portion beyond death.

The first part of this Canto is the overture to the Circles of Purgatory, in all of which we shall have the various phases here indicated: the purgatorial soul in its passage, the appear-

ance of the angel with music, and the transition beyond.

II. The two sets now mingle together, and we have a very effective little scene enacted before our eyes. The dramatic power of the poet shows itself in full mastery in this short play. It would be hard to select from any poet a passage as perfect in a literary sense.

Dante finds a friend here and in vain seeks to embrace him, as he was a shade. He was named Casella and seems to have been noted as a musician; at once Dante calls for a song, Casella sings one of Dante's own songs, a strain of love, at which all these spirits stop and listen with so much content that nothing else "would touch the mind." Then stern Cato, the warder, appears and reproaches them for their delay in ascending the Mountain.

The music of Casella is in strong contrast with that which was heard at the appearance of the Angel. The resignation to the sweets of sensuous love is the present kind, which stops for a time the great purgatorial process. Casella himself has been detained somewhere on the other side, probably for the trait which we note in his song. He has only been able to cross at present through the indulgence granted in the year of the Jubilee (1300) by the Pope.

The legend that the souls enter Purgatory through the mouth of the Tiber has not been

traced, and is probably Dante's own. Yet he clearly adapted it from the heathen myth of Charon and the crossing of the Styx. The wandering about of the soul before the passage is also a pagan conception. But Dante has transformed the ancient story and tinged it deeply with a Christian purport. The Tiber seems now to be the purgatorial river, emptying itself somehow beyond into the supersensible world, after flowing through Rome, the Holy City of the Church, which is the great instrumentality of salvation. Man, plunged into this River and passing by death from the Here to the Hereafter, has to go through the sacred institution of Christendom; *extra Ecclesiam non est salus*, saith the Ecclesia, but not always Dante. The poet is now the myth-maker, and he is not transcending his domain when he makes Casella and other spirits take that miraculous boat-ride out Time into Eternity under the escort of "God's bird" flapping its angel pinions.

One other thought: Did Dante put this song of his, which sings of earthly love, into Purgatory along with Casella? Perchance we may read herein a judgment on a former literary tendency, which he now looks back at and assigns to its proper place.

*Canto Third.* The local limits of the present Canto are the landing-place of the souls and the foot of the purgatorial mountain. Through the

intervening distance Dante and Virgil pass, first with conversation between each other, till, in the second place, they meet and converse with souls who are tarrying in this part of Purgatory.

I. It is to be noted that Virgil here at the start shows himself under self-discipline. He manifests remorse for having yielded to the charms of sensuous music and poetry; he too is in the process, and now has conscience (*coscienza*). Is he to be saved at the end? For what other purpose is the purgatorial ordeal? Dante himself gives no answer, at least not directly.

But another important question arises. The Sun is at his back and is now shining. Dante with his mortal body casts a shadow, while Virgil and the other spirits cast none. How then can an incorporeal object suffer corporeal pains? Such is the question which the poet brings up at present, though it belongs also to the *Inferno*. It is likely that Dante may have heard the objection from some of his readers, and takes the present opportunity to answer it not far from the beginning of a new *Cantica*.

The answer is, however, that there is no answer. Men must accept the fact that disembodied spirits in the future world suffer the tortures of the body; how it is, the Power above "wills not to be unveiled to us." Then follows an exhortation: Mortals, be contented with the *that* (*quia* in medieval Latin). Here is a hint of the old con-

flict between Faith and Reason, between Religion and Philosophy. "If you could have seen all, there had been no need of Mary's son," no need of the incarnation, or visible embodiment of the divine. Man must take the sensuous fact at last and believe, ultimately the science of causes will not help him out. The good heathen (Aristotle and Plato) had no doctrine of the Incarnation, and so lived in unfulfilled desire, which is their sole present sorrow in Limbo.

So Dante at present, but he has not been always so, and will not always remain so. The passage indicates, however, an important phase of his spiritual life. He has passed from philosophy, which is his dear mistress in the *Convito*, has reacted to a certain degree from scholasticism, and begins to show a decided tinge of mysticism. It is evident that Hugo of St. Victor is streaming into his soul, along with Thomas Aquinas. *In iis quæ supra Rationem sunt, non adjuvatur Fides Ratione ulla, quoniam non capit ea Ratio quæ Fides credit.* (Hugo de S. Victor, cited by Scartazzini ad loc.)

Still Dante will again philosophize, both in the present *Cantica* and in the *Paradiso*. But nobody can explain the Trinity, "can travel the infinite road" to the goal where man can comprehend one "substance in three persons." So there is to be no explanation of the present question.

Such is the spirit with which Purgatory is to be entered—the spirit of Faith “which believes those things which Reason grasps not.” The grand Christian experience has in it an unaccountable element, an infinite side, which the finite intellect cannot compass. Herewith the two poets have reached the foot of the Mountain, which they glance at, observing it to be very steep, not to be ascended “without wings” apparently. We note that the scenery is not infernalized, yet is not without an infernal element. It has the Sun shining upon it, yet also hints of punishment.

II. But the ascent is not at present undertaken ; people appear in this place, with whom a conversation is held. They are the souls of men who had died under the ban of the Church, but had repented of their sins before death. Virgil asks them to show him the place of ascent, when they behold Dante’s shadow, which causes them to draw back timidly. In fact their characteristic seems here to be timidity, a purgatorial state of mind opposite to that audacity which led them to defy the Church. They are likened to a flock of sheep in an elaborate comparison, quite without any courage or will of their own ; “that which the first one does do the others,” and the first is “shy in look and modest in gait.” Surely the penitential temper is this for those who faced on

earth excommunication — humility even to sheepishness.

Having thus presented one side, Dante proceeds to present the other. Can the individual be saved through repentance in spite of the Church, the great instrument of salvation? Dante answers emphatically, Yes. The example is Manfred, defeated and excommunicated, but repentant at the moment of death, though "horrible were my sins." His bones even were disinterred by a prelate of the Church and thrown to the wind and rain; "but infinite goodness has such large arms that it embraces whatever turns back to it." Manfred is saved in defiance of the instrument of salvation, which instrument is at last but external. "Through their curse one is not lost so that eternal love cannot return;" no, not lost by any means · man cannot be lost except through himself.

Still the Church, the grand organism of man's salvation, is not to be lightly set aside, according to Dante. "He who dies in contumacy," though he repent at last, must pay the penalty; here it is, this place in the Pre-purgatory, a long training to patience and humility for freeing the sinner of his rashness and insolence. Here he must stay thirty times as long as he remained "in his presumption;" thus the matter is reduced to mathematical exactness, from which we may conclude that it is thirty times harder for sinful man to get



to heaven without the Church than with it. Still, at last he can get there.

The period, however, may be made shorter "by the good prayers" of those above on earth. At this point we have a glimpse of the beautiful thought of intercession, which is a link between the two worlds, the link of charity, which extends not only to the living but to the dead, and alleviates the penalty. So "my good Constance," daughter of Manfred, is to be reminded of his condition and her duty of interceding for her much-delayed parent.

There seems to be a touch of personal affection on the part of the poet for the unfortunate Manfred who is here described as "blond, beautiful, and of gentle aspect." Political ties may have been an influence, but the chief reason that Dante had for selecting him was that the Church had sought to exclude him from Heaven, and had treated him with special indignity. Thus the limits of the ecclesiastical power are shown against the indestructible Free-Will of man, of which our poet is always the champion.

*Canto Fourth.* To the story of Manfred Dante had listened so intently that he was not aware of the lapse of time, which incident leads him off into a little psychological diatribe against the doctrine that man has several souls—two according to the Manicheans, three according to the Platonists. The true view is that the soul is

one, but its powers or faculties are many. Clearly Dante has a strong introspective turn, thinking a good deal about thought.

The Canto we may mark off into two portions: the movement from the first entrance to a projection (*balzo*), with the view from this projection; secondly, the glance at the souls there.

I. All were moving along in the plain at the foot of the Mountain, evidently skirting the latter somewhat, when the spirits shouted at once: "Here is what you asked for"—namely, the entrance through the steep rock. Very narrow it was, and very hard to climb, surely the beginning of the purgatorial path, which required the use of "both hands and feet." Dante has a laborious time scrambling up that passage at an inclination of 45 degrees, and scraping with his body against the rock walls. But at last, with a word of exhortation from Virgil, he reaches a projection "which on that side circles the whole steep" and upon which both sit down to rest, "turned to the East, whence we had ascended," in which expression we note that the course of the present journey is westward up and around the Mountain. They have left Manfred and his troop behind and below in the plain, whereupon they take a glance backward, "which is wont to delight every man."

From the plain Dante then raises his eyes to the Sun and is surprised to find the same on his

left to the North. This leads to a short discourse on the part of Virgil, who explains the relation of the Mountain, which is in the Southern Hemisphere, to the Sun and to the Zodiac. Thus the poet brings before us again the adjustment of the individual in the great physical totality of Earth and Heaven. Dante never lets us forget that he is moving in the presence of the Universe, both natural and spiritual.

Here too we find the poet making the terrestrial division into two hemispheres with a common horizon meeting in Spain westward and in India eastward. Each of these hemispheres has its center in a physical and also symbolical mountain, Sion on this side and Purgatory on the other. The grand luminary of Heaven moves from the first to the second in the present journey, which is truly the movement of man and of the world's history. The two mountains — the old and the new, Hebrew and Christian — are opposites, yet complementary, have one horizon yet are the centers of the two different hemispheres, which, however, make the one globe. So this vast outlook upon cosmical scenery is filled eternally with a spiritual presence.

Here we have a short characterisation of the purgatorial Mountain. It is very lofty, its summit rises out of the range of Dante's vision, and seems very difficult of ascent. Whereat Virgil: "This Mountain is such that it is always hard to

climb at the start below, but the further one goes up, the less troublesome it grows," till at last the journey is as light as a ship running down stream. Virtue becomes a habit, the good is the easy, "then thou wilt be at the end of this path" — namely in the terrestrial Paradise — "there expect repose." Such is the next outlook up the Mountain, wherein we note the aspiring spirit striving for the Higher.

II. But here a contrast suddenly comes to view. In response to the above grand flight of aspiration, these words are heard from a place near by: "Perchance thou wilt be constrained to sit down first." The voice proceeds from a man sitting down and "embracing his knees," more listless "than if indolence were his sister." It is Belacqua, apparently some Florentine acquaintance of Dante's, here made immortal for his laziness in performing his duty.

On this projection, then, are those who have delayed through indolence the works meet for salvation. Now the indolent person is made to wait outside of Purgatory as long as he procrastinated in life. Thus he gets his own, and it would almost seem that he did not care much. Belacqua shows little of the purgatorial temper — not positively bad but nearly indifferent. Quite the reverse is "the flock of sheep" of which Manfred is the leader in the preceding Canto, who have become the opposite of what they were in their sin.

*Canto Fifth.* Such is the first projection on the purgatorial Mountain, which the two poets start to leave. But the people there—the negligent—talk and whisper among themselves, the object of curiosity being that living man with his shadow in the world of spirits. Dante listens to the sound, is evidently somewhat embarrassed by it, and slackens his pace. That is, he is influenced by this gossipy, idle multitude, whereupon Virgil utters a memorable reproof, which seems like an echo of the poet's own conscience, and is really a light thrown forward over the whole Canto, whose two portions we may now consider: the double reproof and the examples.

I. The reproof of Virgil seems to imply two weaknesses. The first is that he should hearken to the popular talk, and by it should permit himself to be hampered in the great work which lies before him, the work of purification. “Follow me and let the people talk; stand firm as a tower whose top is never shaken by a blast of wind.” Again the strong impress of Dante's individuality; iron is his moral purpose, and so endures. Evidently we may read here a protest against the demagoguism which was manifesting itself in the Italian cities of the poet's time.

Then there is the second reproof: the danger of too much reflection. “Always the man in whom thought on thought sprouts forth, removes from himself the mark”—the end to be accom-

plished. Again we note the world-theme of Hamlet, who thinks so much that he does not act. Was this one of Dante's weaknesses? Its possibility he must have seen in himself, being a man of thought.

Such, then, is the double exhortation: be not held back from the supreme end by people's talk without, or by too much thinking within. But the persons now appear who are examples, and who are quite the opposite of that fixity of purpose inculcated by Virgil.

II. The locality is no longer the projection but the side of the Mountain, along which a crowd passes, chanting *Miserere* (*Have mercy upon me; Ps. 51*). When they beheld Dante's shadow, "they changed their song into a long and harsh *Oh!*" A humorous touch showing that they still need their discipline; a little outside matter of curiosity intrudes itself into the work and the very music of purgation. Then they all run and ask concerning the new appearance.

It does not surprise us to learn that these "were sinners up to the last hour," putting off repentance until they were overtaken by a sudden and violent death. Still they had time in the final gasp to repent and to "be reconciled to God who fills our hearts with the desire of seeing Him"—the vision of the Divine which is the goal of the Paradise.

The poet now brings forward three typical

cases, two murders and one death in battle, the latter of which is described with much sympathy and fullness. "I am Buonconte," says the Spirit, and narrates how and where he died. He also describes in strong mythical color, the contest between the good and bad Angel over his remains. The latter is defeated, and makes a truly diabolic complaint: "For a little tear (*lagrimetta*) thou takest away from me the eternal portion of this man," whereupon the demon not being able to carry off the soul, turns his wrath upon the dead body.

This struggle of a good and bad angel over the possession of the deceased man, runs through the mythology of the ages. The Archangel Michael and the Devil had a contest for the body of Moses according to an old Hebrew legend which appears in the New Testament. (*Jude*, V. 9.) In the *Inferno* (XXVII. 112.) a similar contest takes place between St. Francis and Satan for a bad monk who had been a Franciscan, and who was the father of this Buonconte. But the most extensive employment of this Mythus is found in Goethe's *Faust* (second part, last act) where the celestial and infernal cohorts have a grand battle for the possession of Faust's immortal portion (*Unsterbliches*, as Goethe calls it, which is Dante's *eterno di costui*, line 106). Thus the Mythus seeks to set forth the doubt whether the man belongs to the good or bad. But the bal-

ance at last turns in his favor through the help of "one little tear" of penitence. So Buonconte; so too Faust, we must think, as he utters that final word of his, the word of reconciliation with the Divine Order.

It should be noted that the father of this Buonconte was Guido da Montefeltro, mentioned in the *Inferno* as an evil counselor, who lost the fruit of his repentance through a relapse to his besetting sin, while the son here is saved "through one little tear" of penitence at the last moment. Over both father and son Dante introduces the mythical contest with the bad angel, who is victorious in the one case, but is defeated in the other. Thus the same *Mythus* is applied to the same family, connecting by a subtle link the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, and illustrating their respective characteristics.

*Canto Sixth.* We must suppose that Dante and Virgil are still moving along the mountain side as in the preceding *Canto*. The contents of the present *Canto* we shall consider under three heads: concerning prayer, Sordello, apostrophe to Italy.

I. When the people learn that Dante is to go back to the Upper World, they all rush toward him, in order to send word to the living for intercession. The spirits, delayed here by their delay in repentance, wish to advance to their purgatorial trial; they know the time can be shortened



by the petitions of the faithful. The poet compares himself to a winner at a game, round whom the by-standers flock — a humorous glance at the ghostly throng. He names in a passing way several who had come to a violent death, yet had repented at the last moment. For us they are only shadows labeled and put here — “shadows who only prayed that somebody else pray.”

Hence arises the question, What is the good of all this praying? Can it change the Divine mind? Dante brings home to Virgil one of the latter's own passages, which implies that supplication cannot bend the gods: *Desine fata Deum flecti sperare precando* (*Æneid*, VI. 376). Virgil now makes answer, not as Heathen Poet, but as Christian Theologian, of which answer we furnish a literal translation: “The hope of these (supplicants) fails not, for the height of judgment is not abased, because the fire of love accomplishes in one moment that which he who is here lodged ought to atone for.” That is, Justice is not remitted, but is satisfied by Love. Prayer somehow pays for the penalty of the sinner, as one man can pay another's debt, and thus free the debtor from the obligation. Still the difficulty returns: Will the sinner be benefited by escaping from the law of his deeds? Is not the purgatorial punishment for his sake, in order to free him of his sin? Sometimes mercy may demand the shortening of the disci-

pline, sometimes not; will prayer help out the person who is not yet ready? Dante does not try to explain the whole difficulty, but refers to Beatrice, "who shall be a light between the Truth and Intellect." Mark this interpretation, which helps define Beatrice probably better than any other single passage in the poem. So the matter is left in abeyance for the present. But Christian Virgil here affirms, in substance, that Heathen Virgil had "a defect, because the prayer was disjoined from God." Thus the formal theological side of Dante appears again, though we may well hold that Heathendom came to believe in the Gods as an inflexible Fate.

II. While they are passing along, they observe "a Lombard soul, all alone, haughty, disdainful and in the movement of the eyes dignified and slow" — how Dante loved pride, and celebrates it with his highest touches! It is the spirit of Sordello; "he said nothing to us but let us pass, looking merely, like a lion when he rests." But when, in a conversation with him, Virgil says *Mantua*, the two embrace, proud Sordello breaks down with a strong fit of emotion at finding a fellow-countryman. Thus the two Mantuan ghosts interlock, though Dante could not embrace the shade of Casella. This mutual affection of two Italians of the same city is now made the subject of a tremendous sermon preached by Dante to Italy and to all the world.

III. The poet shows himself in complete discord with his time, because his time is in complete discord. "Now thy living men stay not in thee without war, O Italy, slave, sorrow's inn, ship without pilot in a great tempest, bordel." Each man gnaws the other within the same walls; individual, city, country are in one perpetual strife. What is the cause? No law, no ruler, whereupon follows the mighty damnation of the German Emperor for neglecting Italy, "the garden of the Empire." Truly Dante has fallen out with his world and is himself a picture of his own discordant Italy. He even questions Providence, "highest Jove," and wonders what can be the divine purpose of such a terrible discipline. Such is his soul's wrestle with the diabolic reality around him.

A mighty Demosthenic mood of sorrow more than anger; but now the vein changes to a stinging irony when he addresses *Fiorenza mia*. Poor Dante! destined to love most deeply that which he most bitterly hated, namely, his native city! When he touches Florence, how his heart opens, yet pours forth gall! Florentine changeability is now the matter for a frenzied castigation, which was deserved probably, but Dante! He again demonizes himself, here in the Purgatory, as he did repeatedly in the Inferno. Yes, he needs himself somewhat of the purgatorial discipline, and he will not fail to put himself

where he belongs, and apply to himself the lash. Indeed, the writing of this passage was done in a fit of demonic obsession, in which some literary fiend scourged him into his mighty utterance of scorn and damnation.

*Canto Seventh.* The two Mantuans "repeated three and four times their greetings honest and glad," when Sordello asked: "Who are you?" "I am Virgil"—whereupon new surprise and salutation.

I. Virgil again states his condition from the strict theological standpoint. Two facts he mentions about himself: "Through no other guilt did I lose heaven than through not having Faith." Again, "Not through doing but through not doing have I lost" the vision of God. Thus Virgil the Theologian damns Virgil the Heathen. Yet the latter, who is "the glory of the Latins" is almost worshipped by Sordello the Christian: "What grace or merit shows thee to me?" Wherein we may catch another glimpse of the struggle in Dante's soul between his Theology and his Humanity.

But it is getting late and in the night they cannot ascend the Mountain, for which work indeed they need all the light possible. "See! this little streak thou couldst not pass over after sunset" (without Grace illuminant). Accordingly they all move to a place which Sordello

indicates, a little projection from which they can look down upon a new set of people.

Sordello, being a poet, seems to have a free range in this territory, which, in general, we may call the pre-purgatorial Paradise, since we are to behold the story of Eden enacted over again, with certain variations, in the two following Cantos. Dante is fond of bringing poets together; already in the *Inferno* six went through Limbo in company; hereafter in Mid-purgatory Statius will join Dante and Virgil and remain with them quite to the end of the *Cantica*. Why should not a poet show special favor to poets in the other world? For certainly in this world they do not get much favor, particularly during life. But let us take a glance with our three poets down into the new locality which, seen through such eyes, should certainly appear poetical.

II. Here we behold the Valley of Princes, men in high authority, who have neglected their eternal welfare. Very natural is it for such people to be drawn away from their religious duty. The cares of State, and the surroundings of pomp and gayety are not conducive to holy living and contemplation. In fact, the poet has placed the lofty company in an environment of regal magnificence, hinting that which delayed them during life, and in which they still delay before advancing to the purgatorial process. The delights of

the senses are felt even here, victorious color for the eye, and the sweetness of a thousand odours are present ; music too arises, which, however, is of the sacred sort, and thus transfigures the soul out of the sensuous world into the spiritual.

This song, *Salve, Regina, Mater misericordiæ*, is one of the Church's finest and most heart-felt hymns, being sung after vespers. It is first a song of alienation, sung by the sons of Eve, exiles weeping in this vale of tears (*flentes in hac lacrymarum valle*). Wherein we note the suggestion which unfolded into the present scene to the mind of Dante. Moreover in the same song is the prayer addressed to the Virgin for mediation, for the vision of the Divine (*Jesum nobis post hoc exilium ostende*). Thus to his Catholic readers the first words of the familiar song suggest the spirit of the place, which the Protestant reader does not feel without some further explanation. Very much it resembles in tone and fervor the prayer of Margaret in *Faust* before the image of the Virgin.

Sordello now points out the various Kings, Emperors and other dignitaries in the valley. He can be the guide, since he was warrior, poet and statesman, as is handed down in some accounts of his life. In his purgatorial condition he seems to hover between this set and the last, certainly he is one of the negligent.

Of the personages in the Valley of Princes we need not say much. Short snatches of contemporaneous history are these notices; also a kind of world-judgment to whose bar potentates are summoned. The list is headed by the Emperor Rudolph of Hapsburg, who, to Dante's mind, neglected his eternal salvation by neglecting Italy. Yet others are mentioned who interfered quite too much in that same Italy to suit the poet. Note how the artist gives vividness and character to each portrait by marking separately some one look, position, act, or even bodily member, as, for instance, Big-Nose and Little-Nose, who are both present among these princes.

Here then are the men who "through not doing" have delayed their blessedness. Yet they are to be saved. What is the difference between them and Virgil, who also lost the everlasting Kingdom "through not doing?" One point is marked: these men had Faith, Virgil had not, he was born too early. Yet Virgil could not be blamed for his lack of Christianity, while these potentates are to be blamed, since they lived in a Christian world. Still Theology damns the good Heathen.

This Canto has beautiful imagery in it, still it has not the soul of the universal Dante, but the narrow medieval fragment thereof, out of which he is now to rise, in our judgment, to a much higher strain.

*Canto Eighth.* A wonderful piece of work is this Canto, with its reconstruction of the old Hebrew Paradise. Moreover, it contains nothing less than a setting forth of the Divine Order and man's relation therein, thus imaging in small compass the whole poem. The mutual attitude of deity and of mortal, as guardian and ward, as the protector and the protected, is recast in the form of the earliest Mythos of man's creation.

We may first look at the abstract statement, which has, however, an image in it: "May the lamp which is leading thee on high find in thy Free-Will oil sufficient to bring thee to the enameled summit of Heaven" (lines 112-4). Here the two sides of the process of salvation are placed together: the Grace of God with his Divine Order ready to receive on the one hand, and on the other the Free-Will of the individual, which must furnish the material for the kindling and the maintaining of the light.

But the more important statement, indeed the statement of the whole Canto, is mythical. The story of Paradise, derived from the Scriptures, yet transformed from a lost into a saved Eden, is the purgatorial realm which is here to be passed through. Man enters the Garden again, and the Serpent comes again, but the latter is now driven away and the former keeps possession. Thus the ancient Hebrew legend is given a new turn, in fact, is quite reversed by the poet of Christen-



dom. The suggestion runs deep ; in the present work and its view of the world, Paradise is not lost but Satan is defeated, though making still his attempt ; the *Divine Comedy* portrays the recovery of Eden in contrast to Milton, and even to the Hebrew Bible.

In such manner we must stretch our vision to grasp the universal import of the present Canto. Highly characteristic of the true singer is it that he changes the negative discordant outcome of the primeval Mythus into harmony, and makes the deserted Garden bloom afresh, adding in the present case the New Testament to the Old. The idea of a restored Paradise was evidently a favorite one with Dante ; he will return to it and elaborate it more fully at the end of the Purgatorio. But at present we are to witness the pre-purgatorial Paradise, which is the culmination of this first part of the Cantica, and foreshadows the post-purgatorial Paradise, which is the culmination of the entire Cantica.

We are still at the beautiful Valley of the Princes which is the scene of this Paradise ; Dante, Virgil and Sordello are looking down into it, quite as they stood in the previous Canto ; the hymn, *Salve, Regina*, may be supposed to be ended. It is sunset, the darkness of nature begins to spread over the Mountain, wherein the correspondence to the inner darkness of man must be noted, when he has no longer the natural light

of reason for the spirit's guidance, as is the case when he sleeps. The night is truly the devil's time, outwardly and inwardly.

The tone of the beginning is a beautiful prelude to the theme of the Canto; the decline of day compels the seafarer to think of those left behind, to whom he has said farewell; separation from the dear ones and a going into the dark unknown give the key-note. Then that bell heard from afar at the dying of the day stirs with pensive love the reader as well as "the new pilgrim."

The mood now rises into prayer, the appeal to the Divine Governor for protection during the dark period, the night, when the will, the active part of the man, is asleep, and when the fiend, suppressed in the daytime and driven into the obscure nooks of the soul, may creep forth unhindered. Philalethes says that in the ancient prayers of the Church the night was considered to be a time in which people were specially exposed to temptation. The hymn here sung by the gathered spirits beginning with *Te lucis ante*, is found in the Roman Breviary, and we may consider it the medieval "Now I lay me down to sleep." To Dante's contemporary readers the first words would bring to mind the whole hymn; the modern student, in Protestant lands, should see it entire, to catch the full spirit of the scene. Three verses we give in their orig-

inal tongue and meter, since this Latin poetry of the Middle Ages is one of the fountain-heads of the *Divine Comedy*.

*Te lucis ante terminum,  
Rerum Creator, poscimus,  
Ut pro tua clementia  
Sis præsul et custodia.*

*Procul recedant somnia,  
Et noctium phantasmata,  
Hostemque nostrum comprime,  
Ne polluantur corpora.*

*Presta, Pater piissime, (Father)  
Patrique compar Unice, (Son)  
Cum Spiritu Paraclito, (Holy Ghost)  
Regnans per omne seculum.*

Note the movement in these three verses: first is the thought of God as Creator, second is the thought of the Devil as Destroyer, third is the thought not simply of the one God, creative, Hebraic, but of the triune God, paternal, Christian. The religious history of the world as well as the religious development of the individual soul may be seen reflected in this little hymn, which every Christian rehearsed at the close of each day. His race and himself become one harmonious utterance in his prayer-song.

One of the souls here, rising up and looking toward the East, the home of the Divine, intones

the hymn with clasped hands uplifted, when they all sing and pray for protection in the first verse, while in the second they beseech that the sinful element of the world, dreams and phantasms of the night, may be kept afar, and that our grand Foe may be suppressed, "lest our bodies be polluted." Of course this last expression is not specially applicable to disembodied spirits, still the universal sense of it holds good of them too, for they are subject to temptation here in the Pre-purgatory.

Thus we catch the source of Dante's modification of the Hebrew Eden; the Church, in its songs and worship had already transformed the latter. The three verses of the Latin hymn above cited give the divine and the diabolic phases of Paradise, while the third verse returns to the divine with a new meaning.

Now we are to see this threefold thought entering into and organizing the present Canto. Overarching it from beginning to end is the idea of providential protection, and under this celestial dome of Providence lies man at rest, yet exposed to the enemy. Thus a subtle weaving together of the two strands of existence, the superhuman and the human, we observe, in three stages. First is the coming of the Angels for guardianship of the souls in the valley; second is the coming of the Serpent for their perdition; third is his repulse through the Angels, who

return to their post of watchfulness. Verily, the story of Paradise with an important appendix.

I. Scarcely is the prayer-song completed, when two Angels appear to "that gentle army," with two flaming swords, "broken and deprived of their points," not now the complete sword of Justice, as in Hell, but broken off, limited by Mercy. Undoubtedly they are the Cherubim of Genesis, III., 24: "And he placed at the East of the Garden of Eden Cherubims and a flaming sword, which turned every way, to keep the way of the Tree of Life." They are green of raiment, which is the purgatorial color of Hope, and which has no place among the damned or the blessed, according to Thomas Aquinas. Moreover "they come from the bosom of Mary," the fount of Grace in the highest Heaven, in response to the prayer, which is the free act of the individual putting himself into harmony with the Divine Order. But mark these Angels in contrast to the Hebrew ones: they are not to exclude man from Paradise but to protect him in Paradise.

We may infer that Dante, in accord with the hymn just cited, considers sleep, still one of man's greatest mysteries, to be a sort of descent into Paradise on part of the soul, a going back to original helpless innocence, the unconscious state of man when he lies exposed to subtle adverse influences from without, quite unable to

defend himself, prostrate in body and in spirit. Then the Serpent slips in, subtle, malicious, innocence being so defenceless; hence the supplication from below and the guardianship from above. Thus is the Mythus of Eden and of the Fall translated anew into human experience, while expulsion and exclusion are changed into angelic protection.

So much here for the miraculous and superhuman portion: now we come down to the human. Dante descends "only three paces I think," and meets a man, a friend and fellow-soldier, Nino Visconti, Judge of Gallura, concerning whose salvation he had been in great doubt, having looked for him in Hell. "How glad I am to find you in this place, gentle Judge Nino!" cries Dante in some wonder. But the main fact here as everywhere is Dante's journey, "what God through his grace has willed." The poet is the hero, he has gone beyond alive, and is returning alive, being able to bring back news to the living concerning the other world; truly a hero of his race. In the present instance Nino sends word for prayers to his daughter, "my Joanna," to shorten his pre-purgatorial delay; mark, to his daughter, "for I think her mother no longer loves me," having taken a second husband after Nino's death. Here may be felt a sudden slash of the poet's cutting misogyny: "Through her one may

easily understand how long the flame of love lasts in the woman, if eye or touch often rekindles it not." Some read in this bitter outburst a personal experience of the poet; his absence during exile had rendered his own wife forgetful. Verily around Gemma Donati hovers the uncertain and unexplained, yes, the most questionable portion of Dante's life. A number of ungallant sayings about women, at times mingled with vitriol, are scattered up and down the pathway of the *Divine Comedy*; he gives even Mother Eve a smart lashing in the happy scenes of Terrestrial Paradise, a most unfilial act. But here again the poet shows the struggling contradiction in him; for his scoffs at the finite woman he makes amends by portraying the eternal woman, Beatrice.

Dante gazes up into the Heaven which overcanopies this Paradise guarded by prayer and by Angels, and there beholds "three small torches," stars which have risen and taken the place of the four stars which he saw in the morning on entering Purgatory. What stars in the physical skies are meant has been the subject of no little discussion, but their allegoric purport is generally agreed upon; they mean the three celestial or contemplative virtues, Faith, Hope and Charity, now shining on high over the new Paradise. The other four stars (I. 23) were the active, heathen virtues, which fringed the face of ancient Cato with their lustre down yonder in his bailiwick.

A sign out of Heaven of the progress already made; but mark! the Devil is here too, and appears just at this moment of seeming triumph.

II. "There! See our adversary!" cries Sordello and pulls Virgil away from his star-gazing. Just when Dante beholds the three heavenly virtues above, comes the sudden counterstroke; alongside of the good, the positive element, rises the bad, the negative element of the world, embodied in the old Serpent, who is again gliding into Paradise, "perchance such as gave to Eve the bitter food," forever seeking to re-enact the Fall of Man. "Among the grass and flowers crawled the evil reptile," half hidden in the beautiful nature of Paradise, "bending its head round now and then and licking its back"—a symbolic act which indicates much: the turning to self or perchance to the body, and the self caressing which shows indulgence of appetite as well as pride.

The question rises: Was there not a touch of self-gratulation in the hearts of these people comparing the sunk and the risen stars, a throb of self-flattery which caused the Devil to appear just then?

III. Be this as it may, down pounce the angelic guardians, the green wings of "the heavenly hawks" cleave the air, the Serpent flees and is seen no more. This assault of Satan upon Paradise has failed, and the Angels return to



their posts, to watch the rest of the night. It would seem that this attack of the Evil One takes place daily, since it is prophesied by Sordello, as if it were a regular occurrence. Daily indeed is the battle, and daily the victory or defeat.

From this supernatural mythical appearance the poet passes at once to a human appearance here: "I was named Conrad Malaspina," says a spirit to Dante, whereupon the latter pays a high compliment to his country and his family, which will entertain the exiled poet at some period (1306) after the assumed date of the poem (1300). Into the historic background of the present interview we shall not enter; but one may well ask: What connection between this man and the angelic event just witnessed? Was Valdimagra, land of the Malaspina, a kind of Paradise for Italian refugees, one of whom was Dante? So the latter hints with some emphasis. There he received protection from the Serpent, then turned loose in the garden of Italy, while "the guilty head (the Pope) twists the world awry," as if the latter were its serpentine body — evidently another cut at Boniface VIII., Dante's Devil. But in Valdimagra the poet is safe, being in a terrestrial Eden, where the Serpent dares not enter.

The question comes up: Is the Valley of the Princes the only part of Pre-purgatory which receives angelic protection during the night?

What is the ground of this special favor? Apparently there is no ground, so we infer that the people and the places which we have seen hitherto have the same guardianship. Certainly there is the same reason for it. Thus the entire Pre-purgatory is transformed into a protected Eden in the night, imaging the state of man on earth according to the hymn above cited.

At this point, however, a difficulty enters. It is the dogma of the Church, that souls in Purgatory are not subject to temptation. Dante uses language implying the same thing (XI. 22; XXVI. 132, *Poter peccar non è piu nostro*). What, then, is the meaning of the appearance of the Serpent, and of the terror which he excites? Certainly there is some danger, else the whole scene is a sham-battle. It has been supposed that Dante permits some temptation in Pre-purgatory, but none in Purgatory proper, from which the passages above cited are taken. This may be sufficient for the present difficulty.

Still the dogma itself, though upheld by Aquinas, calls forth certain questionings. If the soul in Purgatory cannot sin, is it free? Is it a soul? Has its virtue any merit? Not only in Pre-purgatory but in Mid-purgatory the very idea of purification implies the sin and also implies the possibility of it; from what else is the purgation? The dogma, in this case as in so many others, crystal-

lizes the free human soul, destroys its process. Supremely man is not the limited, but the master of limitations; the battle with finitude, weakness, sin is not finished at the single tussle, but must be fought and won every day.

Now Dante portrays the purgatorial process with a truth and personal directness that makes his book not only a poem but a purification. His deepest fealty is to freedom, the limit-transcending spirit of man, hence springs his supreme loyalty to humanity in the highest sense. But there are two Dantes, one is the dogmatic, theological Dante, the other is the universal, human Dante, and these two are often in a dire inner struggle, which sometimes manifests itself in outer contradiction. Dante, the formal theologian, holds to the opinion that there is no temptation in Purgatory. Dante, the free poet, holds to something which implies the opposite. Conscious Dante is the theologian, unconscious Dante is the poet.

Corresponding to this doctrine of Purgatory is the doctrine of the eternity of Hell. Both fix in perdurable adamant the boundless human spirit; the one says man cannot help being good in Purgatory, the other says that man cannot help being bad in Hell. Both equally deny the truly infinite nature of mind, which has no fate upon it of any kind, which has only one necessity, and that necessity is freedom. Dante's poetic instinct is

always true to freedom, but his reflective utterances mostly are molded by dogmatic authority.

An instructive comparison may be found in the words of two famous translators and commentators, commenting on the hymn *Te lucis ante*, above cited. "*This hymn would seem to have no great applicability to disembodied spirits,*" that is, to the present Canto. So Longfellow. Now listen to Philalethes: *Man sieht wie gut diese Hymne so wohl auf die Tageszeit als auf die nachherige Erscheinung der Schlange passt.* Such is the mighty difference between our spiritual guides through Dante's poem. Verily, the commentator is giving a measure of himself when he undertakes to measure a world-book. How easily do we see that the man's yard-stick is too short, yet he goes on meting and setting down himself and not the poet. Such is the reflection which thou, O reader, will probably apply to the present commentator, turning his own words upon himself.

*Canto Ninth.* The present Canto gives the transition from the pre-purgatorial Paradise to Purgatory proper, from the realm of delay to the actual beginning of purgation.

The poet, probably intending to attune the reader to what follows in the first lines, makes an allusion to an ancient Greek myth, which has caused so great discord of opinion among commentators, that the mood, whatever it be, gets

lost in doubt and controversy. The main question is: Do these first lines describe a moon-dawn or sundawn? If the mythical person here mentioned (Titone, Titanio, Titan are various spellings of the name in manuscripts) be our old friend Tithonus, so well known as the lover of Aurora, then one naturally thinks of the sundawn. But so great are the astronomical and other difficulties to this view, that many of the early and recent commentators (among the latter Philalethes and Witte) say moondawn. Herewith we are inclined to let the matter rest, trying to feel out of the passage some hint of the new light rising when Dante falls asleep in the flowery valley, "where we five were sitting."

The subject of the Canto is the transition of Dante into the process of purification, the spiritual entrance of the poet into the special discipline of Purgatory. He is shown in two different conditions, asleep and awake; which two stages of preparatory experience we may call the unconscious and conscious.

I. In this unconscious state there is a double process taking place, the personal and providential, in the mind and in the world-order, or the subjective and objective sides of the process. These we shall look at separately.

1. Dante passes into sleep, the unconscious state, "at the hour when the swallow begins her sad lays." The swallow is a transformed bird

according to the Greek fable here alluded to by the poet, and its cries "near to the morning" suggest those of a soul seeking to free itself of pain and prison. So they harmonize with the struggling dreamful spirit; at that time "our mind, more divested of the flesh, is as it were divine in its visions."

Such is the internal condition of the dreamer when an eagle appears and snatches him up to the region of fire, to the Empyrean, when both the bird and the man burn till the latter awakes through "the imagined conflagration." Again Classic and Hebrew sources unite in Dante's imagery; the seizing of Ganymede by Zeus in the shape of an eagle is one of the commonplaces of Greek legend, and is what suggests the image here; yet the eagle also plays into Biblical symbolism, notably in *Ezekiel* and in *Revelations*. Chiefly, however, Dante employs the eagle to represent imperial Rome, of which it was the emblem and standard. (See *Purg.* XXXII. 112, and *Par.* VI. 1.)

But what does the eagle and the flight to the Empyrean and the burning indicate in the present case? The whole is a dream, an inner state taking shape; it is the vague subjective embodiment of what is about to happen, a premonition of the rise to the uppermost Heaven; it figures the aspiration of Dante's soul for the higher life and the fulfillment; it shadows forth his deep un-

conscious longing for the eternal, which comes when flesh is purified in fire, type of the purgatorial process. The eagle-dream of Dante is then his aspiration for the last height of celestial Paradise, and manifests his internal preparedness. Such is the subjective side of the process.

2. The poet is awake, Virgil now tells him what really, that is objectively, happened during his sleep: Lucia, a dame from Heaven, appeared and carried him to the entrance of Purgatory, leaving Sordello and the others behind in Pre-purgatory. But Lucia herself is an allegoric figure signifying Divine Grace (or that special phase thereof called Grace illuminant) which can bring him in his unconscious state to the starting point of the great discipline, provided, of course, he has the desire and aspiration.

Here, then, are two allegoric symbols, the Eagle and Lucia, representing the sides of the process, one in the man and the other in the world. The man must first have this inner readiness, and this longing for the grand purification, then the Divine Order will always be present in its messenger Lucia, to help him realize his aspiration, which is, in fact, nothing more than to live in harmony with that Order. The divine within and the divine without will not fail to meet and to co-operate; then, and then only, comes the result. "I changed myself" —

*Mi cambia' io*, cries Dante on opening his eyes, and he also looked on a changed world, which is now purgatorial. So he moved forward behind his leader "toward the height."

Still he is not yet in Purgatory proper; here is the passage, winding and difficult, through which he has to go before he reaches the First Circle. This passage will occupy us for the rest of the Canto.

II. The movement through the purgatorial gate is made by the waking Dante, is therefore, a conscious process, yet it corresponds to the preceding unconscious process, and is the fulfillment of it in a certain degree. It is in the form of an allegory, intricate and purposed throughout, wherefore Dante here calls special attention to his "art" which indeed becomes somewhat artificial.

The spiritual fact portrayed is that of Repentance, the process of Atonement, by which the erring sinful individual puts himself into harmony with the Divine Order. He must have already the aspiration, as before shown; then he can set out upon his penitential journey, as a conscious intended work, in which he will pass through two phases, the inner or subjective, and the divinely ordered or objective. Wherein we note the correspondence to the first portion of the Canto.

1. The subjective process is given allegorically



in the three steps upward to the Gate, where stood the angelic keeper or warder, who held in his hand a naked sword (symbol of the judge) so bright that Dante could not look upon it or on his face. He is the one in authority and gives the warning: "Take care that your coming up hurt you not." If you be not prepared internally and brought hither by Lucia, Divine Grace, this process of Repentance will only injure you. A satisfactory answer is given, and Dante begins to ascend the steps.

The first step was of white marble and so polished "that I mirrored myself in it just as I appear." Dante sees himself as he is within; reflected back to himself he gets a view of his inner condition; a conviction of sin, the first stage of the penitential process. The second step was of sombre material, "of rugged and burnt rock cracked lengthwise and crosswise," forming a cross. This indicates the inner sorrow for sin, the element of contrition. The third step was of porphyry, red as blood, which in our opinion, denotes the grand sacrifice of self, the surrender of the individual, whereby he attains to love, and the internal process reaches its culmination.

Such are the three subjective stages in psychological order — the self-inspection, the self-chastening through sorrow, the self-immolation. Expositors are generally agreed that the whole

is an allegory of the sacrament of Repentance. But in details there is great diversity of interpretation. Nearly all follow closely the scholastic doctrine of Repentance, which has three stages: *contritio cordis*, *confessio oris*, *satisfactio operis*. But these do not fit the three steps without some inversion and violence. Dante clearly, in the present passage, confines himself to the subjective movement of the penitent soul, employing the three steps to show forth the three stages of inner penitence, or the heart's sorrow (*contritio cordis*). His aspiration has settled down to work, and his dream of the flight with the eagle to the Empyrean has begun to realize itself in his soul.

2. The poet now comes to the objective side of the penitential process, which sets forth allegorically how the sinner, when he has passed through the subjective side above given, is to be received into Divine Order, which is represented on Earth by the Church and its organization.

The keeper of the Gate is the priest, holding in his hands the flaming sword of divine authority, which Dante cannot look upon with the eye of flesh; he places upon the topmost rock "both his feet," which rock "seemed to me of adamant," being that upon which Christ has founded his Church. "Ask that he undo the lock," he being the person with the priestly or mediatorial function.

“ I begged for mercy and that he should open, but first I thrice smote myself ” — an act of self-punishment for guilt, or outward sign thereof, evidently corresponding to the three steps. “ Then he marks with the point of his sword seven P’s (*peccata*, sins) on my forehead,” which constitute the Church’s system of the purgatorial process, upon which Dante is now to enter, and through which he is gradually to purify himself of these sins.

The keeper’s garment is of ashen hue, the penitential color. He has two keys, one of silver, one of gold, both necessary for unlocking the Gate. They represent two sides of the priestly function ; to use the one requires judgment, insight, theological science, subjective qualities in the priest ; the other, the golden and more precious, stands for divine authority, which receives the sinner, when his repentance is made manifest. The Gate opens, but hark ! how the hinges roar, as if in resistance ; call it the last protesting bellow of nature against the purgatorial trial. Or are they rusty from little use — “ few are chosen ? ” So thinks our good companion Scartazzini, very learned in divinity. Let us rejoice, however ; Dante is one of the chosen, and so we hear now the sweet hymn of triumph, *Te Deum laudamus*, instead of the hoarse bray of the rusty hinges. He has entered, but not

without a strong warning, which it is well for all to take to heart: "Whoso looketh back returns outside."

Taking a glance over the present Canto we observe a somewhat intricate, yet clear structure. We may also note one of the ways in which Dante's mind frequently works, and shapes its thought into the poetic organism. His method is twofold: he seeks to develop in some way what is going on in the mind of the individual, and then the corresponding movement in the world-order. Truth is not simply internal, but also it must be external, actual. Subjective and objective we have called these two sides, and have observed them twice in this Canto. We shall remark the same tendency in Dante's mind elsewhere, which thus reveals its wholeness. In the work of all great poets we can find the same characteristics, even in ancient Homer, who shows the God without and the God within, how the Divine works in the man and in the world-order to bring forth the great event.

In the history of Christianity there is a continual oscillation between the inner and the outer, between form and spirit, between theology and religion. The New Testament is essentially internal; but in the course of time even its figures of speech crystallized into an ecclesiastical ritual and a faith, as, for instance, the Keys of the Kingdom of heaven and the Rock of the Church

(Matt. XVI. 18). Then this ritual and faith underwent a new process, they were theologized and transformed into an abstract dogma. (See Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* P. III. Suppl. Quaest. XVII. Art. 3. cited by Philalethes and Scartazzini — the subject being “On the entity and quiddity of the Keys”). Then this theologized abstract form was taken up by Dante, and symbolized anew, whereof an example is found in the present Canto. Next Protestantism came and did away with much of the mediatorial machinery of Repentance, throwing the matter mostly back upon the individual conscience, but still leaving a field for the institution, the Church. Finally Philosophy appears and enforces Repentance anew as the act of every rational man who is guilty of a wrong or a folly; he must go through the whole process in himself, both on its subjective and objective sides; he must experience the inner sorrow of transformation, as well as perform the external act of putting himself into harmony with the Divine Order of the world. Can he do so without the mediatorial aid of the Church? The latter says no, and the conflict between it and philosophy begins, a perennial struggle belonging to all times and all religions. This struggle is very strong in Dante, with many fluctuations and contradictions; the present Canto shows how he is already re-symbolizing and transfiguring the theology of Thomas

Aquinas into a deeper spiritual purport. Not altogether satisfied with its somewhat rigid abstract formalism: so the poet must be read here and elsewhere.

Still the Church continues to live, though in the process too. Man must more and more grow to be a law unto himself; yet just this law must also be embodied and realized in the world by an institution, we may call it the Church Universal, truly the purest reflection of the Divine Order. Dante's book at its best reveals this movement of the World-Spirit, creating, destroying, transforming institutions.

Literature also has the mediatorial element which we have noted in this Canto; Dante's own poem has a priestly function, unlocking the Gate of the purgatorial process for many men whom priest or pope cannot reach. Indeed literature in its highest manifestation, of which the *Divine Comedy* is an example, being read not merely with the eye or the intellect, but with the spirit of which it is itself a glorious and beautiful embodiment, becomes sacerdotal, and mediates the erring soul with a silver key and a golden of its own. To read is easy, to read aright is very difficult, and limited to the few; the sacerdotal function of Literature is not yet the possession of the multitude, which is its true destiny.

Between the individual soul and the Divine Order steps the priesthood, mostly with true and

needful help, but sometimes with obstruction, of which there is always danger. The Roman Catholic Church multiplied these steps indefinitely and organized them into an external symbolic ritual—a thing very necessary for the medieval time, which is the grand period of mediation, inasmuch as the individual, rising out of barbarism and absolute caprice, required priestly help at every turn of life, even in small matters. Such is the essential characteristic of the Middle-Age, which is not only middle in time, but middle in thought, and stands in history for mediation in the World-Spirit as well as in the individual soul.

No doubt, human development in its advance makes this mediatorial process more and more an internal one, and Dante himself is a stage in the movement. The rites of the Church symbolize the soul's inner process and outer reconciliation. But Dante, feeling the ritual to be too external for him, symbolizes it over again in fresh and more transparent forms, thus making really a symbol of a symbol in the present Canto and indeed in his entire poem, whereby he turns the spirit back to the true meaning of Repentance when it is in danger of becoming an external rite merely. But mark! it is a process of the soul, and this process must take form in some rite or symbol, whatever be its changes.

### *MID-PURGATORY.*

We now enter upon the most important portion of the present *Cantica*, that portion, in fact, which is often considered the whole of Dante's Purgatory. But it is really the middle division, which we have called Mid-purgatory, made up of Seven Circles for the seven deadly sins. The purgatorial process now properly begins; hitherto in Pre-purgatory there was simply a waiting for this beginning, a punishment of delay by delay.

Already in the general introduction, an outline of Dante's Scheme of the Seven Sins has been given, in accord with what he unfolds in Canto XVII. of the present *Cantica*. Pride, Envy and Anger form a group of sins with a common characteristic; "the ill of the neighbor is loved;" hence these are specially the social sins. The intermediate sin is Sloth, the point of indifference between good and evil. Lust, Gluttony and



Avarice form the remaining group, which we have called the personal sins. All the seven mortal sins spring from Love, which is the source of every virtue and of every vice (Canto XVII. 124), which, therefore, divides itself into two opposite tendencies, good and evil. Thus the poet traces the great ethical dualism back to unity — a fundamental point in his conception of the world.

Dante goes on to say that “natural love (instinct, inclination) is free from error,” sinless. But when mind enters, “love can err through evil object, or through too much or too little vigor.” Sin comes in, accordingly, with mind or reason, which is the universal faculty having both sides of the dualism, and which, therefore, knows both good and evil. Still another activity is necessary, Free-Will, which can choose one side or the other, and therewith rises responsibility for choice. The power of controlling and directing this primordial love lies in man: *Di ritenerlo è in voi la potestate* (XVIII. 72). The system of the Seven Sins is a system of “bad love,” love uncontrolled and misdirected; thus we observe that under the Seven Sins lies the general conception of sin, of which it is the object of Purgatory to free the individual.

Dante is a poet, he has also studied deeply into Theology, but his abstract or theologic statement of sin and the process of purification

from it is very scant and imperfect compared to his poetic or symbolic unfolding of the same. The thought derived from the latter is much more adequate than his own thought formally expressed as thought in the course of his poem.

Undoubtedly the idea of Purgatory goes back to the conception of Sin of which this realm is the purification. The individual has committed some transgression, has violated some law, which law must have both an outer and inner sanction: it must be a law of his own being and a law of universal being. Sin, accordingly, brings about a double estrangement—the estrangement of the individual from himself, that is, from his true Self, and from the Divine Order.

The purgatorial process, therefore, must be adapted to overcome this twofold discord of the human soul, and to bring it back to its twofold harmony—with itself and with the Divine Order. Later we shall see that just these two steps constitute Dante's fundamental divisions of the method of purgation, which is to reconcile the erring individual with himself internally and with God externally. Such is, indeed, the heart of all religion, as well as of poetry and philosophy; they are ways of leading man back to his perfect harmony. Dante's book has all three ways—religion, poetry, philosophy—united into an art which is above art pure and simple.

Sin, accordingly, involves a double transgres-

sion of the law. But what, whose is this law which so binds? Not simply an external command, coming from the outside somewhere; it is man's own law in the profoundest sense, self-legislated, and it not only consists with, but brings about his freedom. So the first thing to be seen in reference to Sin is that it is a violation of the inner law of being, a transgression of the man against his own true selfhood.

How may this be? The individual who sins is really self-destroying, and Sin is, when seen completely, suicidal. Through it he is assailing the law of his own existence—that Law by which he is. If the deed be returned to the doer, and if it undoes him, that is the test of his guilt. Sin, therefore, is not only negative, but self-negative; the sinner is fundamentally violating himself in the violation of the Law.

Now we pass to the other side: just at this point of self-violation he violates the Divine Order, whose supreme object is to save man, not to destroy him, or even permit him to be destroyed, unless he so wills. God is supremely the Father, but by the destruction of the child, Fatherhood too is undone.

In like manner the neighbor is a self, and the violation of the Law takes place when he is assailed. He is my brother, he has selfhood as I have, and his selfhood is just as precious as mine, and I must recognize it to be so. If I do

not, then my deed turns back to myself, and I must feel the force of my own violation. If the individual wantonly impairs or destroys another individual, he has impaired or destroyed individuality as such, which is his own essence. Thus he must see himself in his neighbor and brother, and if he violates the brotherhood of man, in the same degree he violates the fatherhood of God, for the neighbor too is God's son, with divine selfhood in him.

Salvation is, therefore, the supreme need of the soul, and the supreme divine injunction, according to the Christian conception of the world. Let the individual be saved—saved from his own destructive act, and from that of his neighbor. Selfhood is to be preserved, not in a state of contradiction and discord, but in a state of harmony within and without. Individuality is to recognize itself as universal, which is also God's recognition of it.

Here we may note a verbal distinction of importance. Individuality, we say—not individualism; this latter is not universal, but limited, confined to itself against the other individual, hence is Sin. Between selfhood and selfishness lies all the difference which exists between good and evil. To assert your individuality is not only right but a duty, to assert your individualism is a sin and really is self-undoing.

From the standpoint of Volition we can

express the same thing by saying that the Will is not to crush another Will, for thus it crushes itself, but the grand attainment of freedom, personal and political, is reached when Free-Will wills Free-Will universally (see General Introduction, p. 57).

But when the sinful deed has been done, the sinner is to be placed under discipline ; he must have his deed, his own Will. If he persists in his sinful attitude in defiance of the punishment, he is in the Inferno. If he accepts his discipline, and sees that it is necessary for his purification, he possesses the Good of the Intellect, and is in Purgatory, which is the divine training to free man of inner and outer discord, to free him of sin against selfhood and against the Divine Order. All the Seven Circles presuppose the sinner as still guilty, but knowing the fact and and willing the work of purgation.

In Dante's organization of the purgatorial process this one fundamental sin is shown in seven different forms, which are the seven capital sins, all of which manifest in some phase the individual through individualism destroying individuality either in himself or in others. Or we may say, they show the seven different forms of the conflict between selfhood and selfishness, selfhood having the right, and selfishness the wrong, since the latter is self-undoing, and hence God-undoing. Or, using still other terms sometimes employed,

we may express the matter thus: the Ego, through Egoism nullifies the Ego either in itself or in another Ego, and so is self-nullified.

Now, if the reader deems this thought to be as fundamental as we deem it for comprehending Dante's Purgatory, he will be willing to see it set down in its three stages, which, taken together, may be called the process of sin.

1. The individual asserts himself, his own worth, his ability to be all that he can be. This is the right of individuality.

2. This self-assertion the individual pushes to the point where it assails individuality. This is the wrong of individualism — sin.

3. Thus the individual in sin assails himself, his own deepest principle of being, namely individuality, and therein assails the Divine Order. He directs himself against selfhood, thus he is truly self-negative, sinful, inhuman, infernal.

In every one of the Seven Sins we can trace this process in its three stages, which we shall call the positive, negative, and self-negative. Yet the three stages are one movement of the spirit in which the individual is seen manifesting his finitude and inner contradiction, out of which he is to rise into harmony with himself and with the Divine Order through the purgatorial discipline.

Three stages we have just noted, and yet we should note the fourth stage also, though in it we

pass out of the sin into the purgation of the sin. Call to mind again the third stage: Sin is in its essence self-undoing; but if it completely undoes itself it becomes the opposite of itself, namely, the Good, and this is just the end of the purgatorial process. Only when sin persists in its self-undoing and remains negative, never making the grand step out of itself over into the positive or the Good, is it sin, inner contradiction, discord.

There is no doubt that just at this point we touch one of the most difficult matters in all thinking, namely, this ambiguity of the self-negative, which is both positive and negative in one thought; or, to give the ethical and religious phase, this duplicity of evil, sin, nay, of the human soul, which has both the opposite sides in itself — the bad and the good, and which is to move through itself from one into the other.

The third stage above given is called self-negation, but this has in it both negation and affirmation — denying, yet denying itself and thus affirming with its double negative. The fourth is truly the purgatorial stage: sin, being served up to itself is also punishment, which, if accepted, undoes sin. But if the punishment be defied and the sin persisted in, the spirit of the Inferno comes to view.

The fourth stage, therefore, is a return to the positive, the Good, which, as above indicated, is

also the first stage wherewith the cycle of the process is completed. Yet there is a difference between the first and the fourth stages: the one is immediate, the state of innocence of Paradise; the other is mediated, has had the experience of sin, has acquired the knowledge of evil. Or, the first is the primal unconscious right of the individual asserting himself; the second is the same right as a conscious purpose and principle, which has behind it the mastery of the negative.

What has all this to do with Dante? It is an attempt to point out and state in a philosophical form what he is seeking to do in a mythical form. The whole process of sin and its purgation turns upon the double movement which lies in the idea of self-negation, and which is the twofold nature of human spirit in its oneness.

We shall now examine the method which Dante employs to set forth this doctrine, and to bring the same into the imaginations and hearts of men. It is the method whereby the individual purges himself of sin, and we shall find it common to all the Seven Sins.

Accordingly, we are now to behold the structure which underlies each Circle of Mid-purgatory, and which will be found to vary only in external details throughout its series of terraces. Note, therefore, that in the previous division mentioned in the Introduction, we have seen this part of Purgatory organized into the Seven Circles, but



now each Circle is to be organized according to its fundamental idea, namely the purgation of sin. Already it has been indicated that sin produces a double estrangement of the guilty man—from himself and from the Divine Order. Herein lies the thought of Dante's first grand division of the purgatorial process: there must be a reconciliation of the individual with himself and with God; he must get rid internally of his sinful disposition, and be received externally into harmony with the Divine Order. These two phases we shall call the subjective and objective (we use the words unwillingly but can find no better for the purpose), being the two sides of the one great cycle of purification.

I. The subjective, internal phase is first to be considered, since the sinful individual therein is given his preparatory training; this is his curriculum of discipline, through which he is to go and acquire freedom. Or we may call it the school of sin, out of which he passes and graduates into a new life through his purgatorial experience.

What are the methods, the text-books used in this school? Thus the pedagogue asks with some degree of interest. The most important principle is that the sinner should get back his own deed, he must feel in his own body what it is to sin. The proud must be bent under the weight of Pride, the envious must have their eyelids

sewed up, the angry must dwell in smoke. The reason is, the punishment is their own sinful conduct, whose cup they must drink, and then they know its contents. Dante has clearly not abolished corporeal punishment in his school, nor has God. Still further, the sinner must accept the penalty, affirm its justice, and even rejoice at it, as the means of his purification; if he revolts and declaims against the cruelty of making him stand face to face with his deed and take its consequences, he cannot remain in Purgatory, he is put into Hell. But if he swallows his medicine, however bitter, he will get well. Such is the promise, and we can see that it must be so.

But this is not the whole of his purgatorial education, help is given by way of examples which he is to contemplate. Thus all history, sacred and profane, all legendary lore, Classical, Hebrew, Christian are made to contribute to the purification of the soul. These examples are of two kinds, they incite to the good — the suasive, positive, hortatory examples; or they show the consequences of the bad — the dissuasive, negative, deterrent examples. Both kinds are ideal, taken from the past, while the instances of those in the purgatorial process are real, are present, and most of them were the poet's own contemporaries.

Such is the school with two branches essentially, experience and contemplation, quite including

present and past, life and learning, art and religion and philosophy, having the highest of all educational objects, the purification of the soul that it transcend its shortcomings and become like unto the Divine Soul, which we shall behold here in its representative, the angel reaching down and receiving its human counterpart.

Next comes the programme of the studies in this school of Dante, who generally has his own way of doing things. The subjective side of the purgatorial process falls into three parts which the poet never fails to treat in the same order; these are the hortatory (1), the expiatory (2) and the deterrent (3) parts, all of which are illustrated by examples. Observe again that this order is common to the Seven Circles, for which reason we shall unfold it in a little detail.

1. The first examples coming to the purgatorial man are those which show the good, and thus give their evidence and influence against evil. Specially they are instances of the virtue opposite to the vice which is being purged, of humility as opposite to pride, of chastity as opposite to lust. They incite to good life, they help the burdened sinner rise up beneath his weight, they are a cord let down from Heaven which the struggling man may grasp, and so keep from falling.

This first set of people do not appear in person, but are brought before the mind ideally; they are celestial — an element of Paradise here

in Purgatory. Heroes and heroines of the race they are, who may have lived at some period of the Past, but now have an ideal life in the Present, still inspiring and uplifting mankind with their virtues. These exemplary personages are taken from all peoples, Heathen as well as Christian, wherein the poet shows himself rising into the sphere of Universal Religion, of which the particular religions of the world are the varied manifestations.

Note that the first example of every virtue in the Seven Circles is Mary, the mother of Christ, the human embodiment of all moral excellence. The position of the Mother thus is made transcendent, as she is the one who has transmitted her virtues to her Son. This character of Mary is derived, as we shall see, mainly from St. Bonaventura, who has adapted it from the New Testament.

2. The second set of examples is made up of those actually undergoing the purgatorial process. They are the spirits with whom Dante converses as with people present before him, and from whom we hear much about history, politics and theology. They belong mostly to the poet's time, and have still a strong terrestrial interest. They are all supposed to be Christians, for the Heathen are formally excluded from the benefit of Purgatory, having died without the saving faith in Christ. Still we meet here Cato and

Statius; the latter, however, has been secretly converted to Christianity, according to Dante.

All these people show the purgatorial temper, which is now their fundamental trait; they accept their discipline as a blessing, they wish for the penalty till they be purged of the sin. Hence we have a paradisaical and an infernal strand twisted together in the purgatorial character; there is the seeking the good, yet also the yielding to the bad; the will is not yet fully able to realize itself in the deed and disposition, though it is trying hard; the two, Hell and Heaven, make up the man still, in struggle yet in hope.

Such is the reality, hence this set of examples may be called the real set in contrast to the two ideal sets of *Paradiso* and *Inferno*. The punishment of these people is shown, it is congruent with their sin; accordingly we may note here a touch of grotesqueness, of evil undoing evil in the very penalty and attitude of the sinner. But punishment now helps the soul, is a part of the process which the man consciously undergoes. Thus he is no longer purely negative, comic; he is not undone but saved, canceling his sin through himself. Such a person can not be eternally grotesque, but only for a while.

3. The third set of examples is composed of those people whose awful fate works upon the purgatorial soul through fear. They show the consequences of evil; the wicked are seen to perish

by means of their own guilt. Not the highest motive, still a motive; not yet can the world dispense with terror as a discipline. The love of the good is not always effective; indeed tragedy, which in one way or other portrays the terrible example, seems still the most potent form of Art. Dante, therefore, has, in his discipline, examples which deter, monitory, fear-inspiring.

Hence they are properly infernal. Such people have lost the *Good of the Intellect*, and are shown for the contemplation of the person who is in the purgatorial process, and who must think: "This is what I shall become, if that diabolic element in me gets uppermost." Thus Dante's *Inferno* becomes a part of the discipline here, is reduced to an element of Purgatory, which it certainly is. Man sees justice, feels at first the terror of it, then possibly comes to feel the goodness of it. To read Dante's *Inferno* has, or ought to have, upon the reader the same purgatorial effect, for the reader is also going through the Purgatory of Life.

We observe again that these examples are ideal, reaching the soul through contemplation and taken from the Past. Especially Heathendom can furnish such instances, since it belongs naturally to the *Inferno*, according to Dante's conception. But the poet is impartial as well as universal; Christendom and Hebrewdom also furnish their separate quotas.

Such, then, are the three sets of examples which Dante introduces into his Purgatory. It is often indicated that he is undergoing the discipline along with these souls, especially is some such idea hinted in the Circles of Pride, of Anger, and of Lust. So we may say that the poet himself, the living man, is the fourth example for the reader of this *Cantica* — the poet whose writing, to be worth anything, must be an actual purgatorial journey, which has made him lean (*m'ha fatto macro*). And the reader is himself the fifth example, if he be truly getting anything out of this poem; he is the most real example of all, for the living man here and now has to go through the realm of purgatorial proof — how is he taking his discipline?

Examples, then, are the grand means of purification — hortatory, expiatory, deterrent — paradisaical, purgatorial, infernal. What an education! It is clear that Dante saw the deep significance of the example in training mankind, culminating in the Great Exemplar. Men of the past were to him a vast gallery of examples, running backward into Time in three grand lines — Christian, Hebrew, Greco-Roman. History is veritably a Purgatory, full of instances, which the living man is to take unto himself, and therein become all that his race has been. Mark again the divisions here: examples which incite to the universal life, appealing to what is highest in the

soul, love of the good; then the opposite examples, which show the purely individual life, selfish, sinful, appealing through their outcome to the fear of evil. The two antipodal strokes of man's heart—love and fear—are used by the poet to elevate man out of individualism into an universal life. Very old instruments they are, often employed before: "Thou shalt *love* the Lord thy God"—surely the first injunction; then we can find something about the second injunction in the same Book: "The *fear* of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." For beginners in wisdom very necessary is this fear, and is not without effect upon the old too. In the nursery, in the school, in the world, the rule of love is paramount, but the rule of fear is not yet abolished; man has still to fear justice, to fear the return of the wicked deed. Even heathen Aristotle could say that fear (along with pity) was one of the chief means of the ethical purification (catharsis), which comes from tragic art.

Thus Dante in the present book looks on all history as purgatorial, and puts many of its great characters into his Purgatory as examples, then puts himself there contemplating them, and finally compels his reader to go there and contemplate both the examples and himself. But herein he stands not alone; all great literature has this purgatorial element, not being simply an



amusement or some time-killing expedient. But enough of this! What next?

II. We now pass to what we have called the objective side of the purgatorial process. The sinner is supposed to have completed the inner or subjective side, as above set forth; in his given Circle he has gone through *Inferno* and *Paradiso* ideally and *Purgatorio* really, and taken them into himself through contemplation and discipline until he is freed internally of his sinful disposition. What then happens? He must be received into the Divine Order, which is now to appear, and which reveals itself in three phases: in an outer appearance to the vision, in a musical utterance for the emotion, in a verbal declaration for the understanding.

1. The appearance is the angel, "the messenger of God," the representative of the Divine Order. Such is its general purport; it is a necessity at the present juncture, and is not to be regarded as a mere sport of capricious fancy. The angel has been evolved, so to speak, and must appear just at the right moment. The man has purified himself of sin, has mastered his habit of vice, has transcended his limitation; hence his infinite nature shines forth, which is truly his spiritual essence, and finds its corresponding element in the world.

Thus the infinite and the divine without appears when the infinite and the divine within has

asserted itself — just then and not till then. The angel is the flash of deity who meets the man outwardly when the man inwardly has transformed himself into a divine counterpart ; he participates in God when he has made himself godlike ; behold the manifestation.

At this point we must mark a new phase of Dantean mythology, which has now to express the union between the human and divine. The Purgatorio must employ the angel in contrast to the Inferno which is the realm of the demon. The angel corresponds to man asserting his infinite nature, rising above limits, and becoming a spirit ; whereas the demon corresponds to man yielding to his finite nature and becoming a beast, a monster. The struggle between the two is already hinted in the Inferno where the angel comes down and scatters the fiends at the gates of Dis.

The angelic word to Dante is usually, “ Go up higher,” whereby is expressed the characteristic of both man and angel — the rise out of finitude. Light is the outer element surrounding the celestial appearance — from time immemorial the symbol of spirit. Dante cannot at first see on account of the excess of brilliancy, but vision will come finally. The angel takes away each time one of the P's (sins) marked on Dante's forehead ; but before the external mark can be wiped off, it must be erased already within. Like

sees and recognizes like ; the angel can only appear when the man is prepared.

Such is, then, the angelic manifestation to the vision of the purgatorial traveler, a winged shape appearing in light, pointing to the gate which leads upwards, speaking the word of ascent, and obliterating the mark of sin. In each Circle it appears when the internal process is completed.

2. The second phase of this process of the soul's reception into the Divine Order is the breaking forth of some melodious utterance from above. Music is supremely the language of the emotions, yet is also an expression of the world's harmony. Here it flows out of Heaven and greets the purified man, when he has freed himself of sin and discord. He is now attuned to the celestial choir, his emotional nature is also purged in the trial, and he feels the rhythm of God. Music can be sensuous only, finite, administering merely to the baser part in man ; but all great music expresses the harmony between the individual and universal, is the cosmos set in concordant notes for the human ear. So to the old Hebrew the morning stars once sang together, and the old Greek heard the spheres choring in tune. As the new spiritual fact previously assumed the form of an angel clothed in light for the vision, so now the same fact garbs itself in sweet sounds for the hearing, and thus attunes to the

Divine Order the emotional side of man's nature. But he must be prepared for the music by his purgatorial discipline, else he cannot possibly hear it.

Such, it seems to us, is the function of music in the present case, but the poet has left many details in the dark. In fact, he sometimes quite omits this musical portion, or reduces it to mere speech. Then we are repeatedly in doubt about who did the singing or the speaking. An unseen choir of angels, the sinners in the Circle, the appearing angel—who? In the seven cases the poet's usage varies. In the first Circle, "voices sang"—whose voices? In the second Circle it "was sung behind"—by whom? In the next four Circles only speech is mentioned—some angel is the speaker. In the seventh Circle the angel sang—evidently the angel which had appeared and was directing Dante to the flame which is here his gate leading above. Finally "a voice guided us which was singing beyond" in Terrestrial Paradise (XXVII. 55), wherewith the movement of Mid-purgatory comes to an end.

For some reason the poet has chosen to abbreviate this musical part, but he has made up the deficiency in other portions of the *Cantica*. Song is an essential element of Christian worship, and the Latin hymn is deeply imbedded in the great Christian poem. We shall take notice of these hymns as they are strewn through the purgatorial

process, since they are an utterance which breaks out at various stages of the mighty trial of the soul. Perhaps, too, we may be allowed to supply in imagination the musical accompaniment, when it is not openly given by the poet.

3. The third is the final and completed phase of the repentant sinner's reception into the Divine Order, expressing itself in the so-called Beatitudes. Music now finds words, of which the first is always Blessed, and is addressed from above. These Beatitudes are taken originally from the lips of Christ, who speaks here symbolically, and thereby speaks through all time. They are seven in number, and set forth the dispositions opposed to the Seven Sins. The angelic voice in song or speech proclaims from Heaven the purified soul to be blessed, so far as the purification has proceeded.

Perfect blessedness is, however, only to be attained in Paradise, this of Purgatory is but partial. One sin after another is purged from the soul, but each purgation is a foreshadowing of Heaven, which manifests itself in the angel, in the harmony and in the proclamation, all coming down from above to the man below, who, however, must be internally ready by his discipline. Three phases of the objective side of the purgatorial process we have named them, seeking to embrace and to carry heavenward the whole man : the Angel for his external guidance and help, the

Music for his unconscious attunement of soul, the Beatitude for his conscious understanding, which demands some definition of blessedness.

Such is the general outline of the purgatorial process, as it is found in each of the Seven Circles. Thus it is repeated seven times, and, in the mind of Dante, is the universal form of purification, the true method of purifying one's self from sinful habit of every kind. And indeed it is a process which, in one way or other, all rational men at all times in all nations have passed through, under many variations of ritual and of expression. The substance of the matter is: the estranged soul, repentant, seeking to transcend the bonds which hold it in alienation and servitude, has to undergo an internal process of expiation, and then is to be received into harmony with the Divine Order. The formulas may vary much in speech and ceremonial, but the thought in all is the same.

The Dantean process is the Christian one, derived from the New Testament chiefly, patterned after the rites of the Church, and elaborated in the doctrines of the Fathers. A ritual of purification it is, which, if honestly followed, will do its work to-day. Not of necessity do we need outwardly in body to go through all these motions, but we must still have the process ideally in some form. The reading of this poem may be sufficient for the reader who is ready to take it

up in entirety, who can make it a poetic breviary for the divine catharsis.

The structure of Mid-purgatory now lies outlined before us. In every Circle we observe that there are six stages or divisions, each of which has at bottom a common principle or reason.

For instance the hortatory examples have the same principle throughout the Seven Circles, yet the illustrations in each Circle are different. Hence we would say that all these examples are homologous. In like manner, all the deterrent examples in the Seven Circles are homologous. These homologies of the poetic organism are its great structural fact, and are to be carefully traced and put together by the student. Note, then, that there are six lines of structure (see table below) and seven homologues in each line, one for each of the seven sins.

And now one other line of homologues we shall trace, though we have not mentioned it above, as it is hardly an independent line of the process. It pertains to the manner in which the examples, both hortatory and deterrent, are imparted to the purgatorial man. This manner changes in each Circle; in seven different ways, therefore, the examples are brought home to the sinner, varying according to his condition, physical and mental. For instance, in *Pride* he beholds the examples by outer vision; but in *Envy* his eyes are sewed up, so he has to obtain

<i>Purgatorial Process.</i>	<i>Pride.</i>	<i>Envy.</i>	<i>Anger.</i>	<i>Sloth.</i>	<i>Avarice.</i>	<i>Guttony.</i>	<i>Lust.</i>
I. SUBJECTIVE SIDE OF THE PROCESS — HUMAN UP TO DIVINE.							
1. Examples. Hortatory. Ideal. Paradise.	Mary. David. Trajan.	Mary. Orestes.	Mary. Pisistratus. Stephcn.	Mary. Jul. Cæsar.	Mary. Fabricius.	Mary. Women of old Rome. Daniel, et al.	Mary. Diana.
2. Examples. Expiatory. Actually Present. Purgatory.	Aldobran- deschi. Oderisi. Salvani.	Sapia. Rinier. Guido del Duca.	Marco Lombardo.	Abbot of San Zeno.	Adrian V. Hugh Capet. Statius.	Forese Donati. Bonagiunta. et al.	Guido Guinicelli. Arnold Daniel.
3. Examples. Deterrent. Ideal. Inferno.	11 persons. 2 cities.	Cain. Aglauros.	Progne. Hanan. Amata.	Fleeing Israelites. Fleeing Trojans.	Pygmalion. Midas. Achan. et al.	Centaurs. Companions of Gideon.	Sodom & Gomorrah. Pasiphae.
(Manner of im- parting the ideal ex- amples.)	Outer vision. Plastic forms.	Hearing. Airy voices speak them.	Inner vision Dream.	Two souls in front shout them. Two in the rear, do.	One soul speaks both kinds of examples.	The Tree has a voice to speak them.	Souls speak them from the fire.
II. OBJECTIVE SIDE OF THE PROCESS — DIVINE DOWN TO HUMAN.							
1. The angel appears.	Shows the passage. Removes the P.	do.	do.	do.	do.	do.	The P. is burnt out.
2. Expression of the harmony.	Voices sang.	It was sung behind.	An angel speaks.	The angel affirming.	He (or they) had said.	I heard him say.	He sang.
3. The Reali- tude.	Poor in spirit.	Merciful.	Peace- makers.	Who mourn.	Who thirst for right- eousness.	Who hunger for right- eousness.	Pure in heart.



them through hearing. Thus we have seven homologues on this line, one for each Circle, yet linked together by a common principle.

Now, as the biologist must investigate the homologies of the human skeleton, ere he can reach the ideal secret of life, so the student of Dante must trace the homologies of the purgatorial structure ere he can attain the ideal secret of its poetry. For a better survey of the whole I shall endeavor to cast all these homologous elements into the form of a table, which is veritably the skeleton of Purgatory. Let it not scare anybody, for it is a dead thing, though the condition of life. On the other hand, let it not become too attractive, for it is not the spirit, which cannot be tabulated, being in itself the principle of all movement, indeed of self-movement. Used aright, such a table may help the faithful reader organize his purgatorial journey in all its mazes and intricacies, often confounding enough; but mark again! he must rise out of these tabular limits into the spirit whose principle is always limit-transcending.

A glance at the above table shows that the New Testament is the beginning and the end of the purgatorial process. It starts with the ideal example of Mary the Mother, and closes with the fulfillment of blessedness in words spoken by Christ the Son. The first three stages of the discipline, paradisaical, purgatorial, infernal, may

all be deduced from the Lord's Prayer which Dante himself paraphrases in Canto XI (see commentary on the passage). The Life of Mary, the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord's Prayer are the primordial sources of the Dantean scheme of Purgatory.

But in the New Testament itself no such scheme is given, only the scattered hints or ideas of it can we find there. Who first organized it? In general we can say that the organism is a growth, and develops along with the Christian Church. Still there are two writers from whom Dante drew very important suggestions for his purgatorial system. These are Bonaventura and Thomas Aquinas, the Doctor Seraphicus and the Doctor Angelicus, of the Latin Church, both of whom have been duly celebrated by our poet in the *Paradiso*, being honored by him above all other Theologians in the Sun and assigned to the highest functions there, doubtless in gratitude for their help.

It is Bonaventura who has given to Dante the order of the Seven Sins coupled with the seven virtues opposed to these sins, and who has drawn from the scattered allusions to the life of Mary in the New Testament the instances which illustrate the seven virtues. The following passage is taken from his *Speculum Beatae Virginis Lect. IV*, as cited by Scartazzini (*Com. ad Purg. XXV. 128*). We shall quote the original Latin,

that the reader may see just what Dante saw and thought over and wrought over, till he transformed it into his purgatorial system and into his poem. In fact the passage is the germ of the entire subjective side of the process of purgation as unfolded above. Somehow to us this old Latin shows a Dantean characteristic also, being the most subtly organized of all human speech in its grammatical construction and in its rhetorical antithesis. Observe, too, its rhymes, and rhythmic balancing, and its measured recurrences, almost metrical.

Ispa est Maria, quæ et omni vitio caruit, et omni virtute claruit. Ipsa, inquam, est Maria, quæ a septem vitiis capitalibus fuit immunissima. Maria enim contra *superbiam* fuit profundissima per *humilitatem*, contra *invidiam* affectuosissima per *charitatem*, contra *iram* mansuetissima per *lenitatem*, contra *accidiam* indefesissima per *sedulitatem*; Maria contra *avaritiam* tenuissima per *panpertatem*, Maria contra *gulam* temperatissima per *sobrietatem*, Maria contra *luxuriam* castissima per *virginitatem* fuit.

What refinement of linguistic structure! Yet under this artificial speech, perchance by means of it, we feel the upspring, we catch the spirit soaring heavenward. Echoes of Dante can surely be heard in this passage. Even the rhymes are hinted to the poet in a sort of magnified *terza rima*, here seven times recurring in each of those

three endings, *am, issima, tatem*. Note also the triplicity in the construction of each sentence, all being measured alike. Why should the poet not turn the subject into verse? Inspiration on the one hand, structure on the other, the two elements of Dante's poetry, are already present in Bonaventura, with a suggestion of the music in rhyme and meter.

Bonaventura goes on to say that he has taken all these illustrations of the virtues from passages of Scripture "in which we have found the name of Mary expressed." Then he enumerates the special actions in which Mary shows herself opposed to the Seven Sins. We shall cite two of these actions, the first and the last, indicating her humility and her chastity as opposed to the sins of Pride and Lust, both of which passages are taken into the text of Dante's poem from the Latin Vulgate: *Maria profundissima fuit apud se per humilitatem; ipsa enim est Maria de qua dicitur in Luca: ECCE ANCILLA DOMINI. . . . Maria castissima fuit per virginitatem; ipsa enim est Maria de qua dicitur: Dixit autem Maria ad Angelum, VIRUM NON COGNOSCO*. Thus the life of Mary is organized, as it were by Bonaventura into the seven virtues as opposed to the Seven Sins, and through him is transmitted to Dante.

Now we are to see what the poet has added to the theologian. Bonaventura is narrowly Christian, confining himself to the one example from

the New Testament; Dante, on the contrary, takes old Hebrew, and even old Heathen examples of the same virtues which Mary has shown, thus rising into the sphere of universal religion, which belongs in some form to all times and peoples. Mighty is this superiority of the poet, making him also universal, a man for all times and peoples, while the medieval theologian belongs to a given time and place only, and has long since been buried in the dust of the ages, out of which he has been dug and set up for a moment to illustrate the poet.

Again, Bonaventura represents in his single example of Mary only the one set of examples, namely, the hortatory or paradisaical set; while Dante adds two other sets, the purgatorial and the infernal, and thus makes the inner process of the soul's discipline complete. Still we must not underrate the theologian's contribution: he gives the order of the Seven Sins and of the opposing virtues; he furnishes the supreme example of the good in the person of Mary, and probably he gave to the poet the general idea of the example as a means of purgatorial training; he brings together the scriptural passages which relate to Mary's life, for Dante's use. In general, we may say that Bonaventura has suggested the subjective side of the purgatorial scheme to the poet, in true accord with his title of Seraphic Doctor.

Next we pass to the contribution of Thomas

Aquinas, doubtless the greatest of all Christian theologians, to the Purgatory of Dante. True to his title of Angelic Doctor, he has given to the poet his angelology, which begins and overarches the entire objective side of the purgatorial process. Still the doctrine of angelic ministration goes back to the New Testament (see especially *Heb. C. I*), and it had been developed long before the time of Aquinas very fully in the writings falsely ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite. But the distinctive thing which Aquinas has contributed to Dante's purgatorial scheme is the employment of the Beatitudes, sung or spoken by angels down to the man purifying himself.

According to Aquinas, the grand end of man is the attainment of blessedness (*beatitudo*), which is perfectly reached only in the vision of God in the celestial Paradise (*Summa Th. II., C. 1, Qu. 4*). Still, a partial attainment is possible in this life through the practice of the virtues, which may be regarded as steps up the heavenly ladder toward supreme blessedness. But Aquinas differs from Dante at times in reference to sins of which the special Beatitudes are the counterparts. For instance, the first Beatitude, *Blessed are the poor in spirit*, is referred by the theologian "to the contempt of worldly possessions or honors," while the poet opposes it to Pride, the fundamental sin of individualism. On the contrary, both agree in opposing the second Beati-

tude (*Beati misericordes*) to Envy: *Invidia opponitur misericordiæ directæ* (Aquinas, *S. Th.* II., Qu. 36, A. 1). In other cases there are differences of detail; still it is plain that the suggestion of the line of Beatitudes (see table above), and indeed of the whole objective side of the purgatorial system of Dante came from Aquinas, in whom our poet was well read.

In such manner these two great theologians of the Latin Church have given their special contributions to the purgatorial scheme of Dante, in whom they are united and transfigured into a new and mightier force, which promises to perpetuate their influence through Christendom. Bonaventura has exaltation, prophecy, inspiration; Aquinas has the cold, logical mind which calmly regards and unfolds the indwelling reason of the world; both have the Latin sense of organization in the smallest details. Both are in Dante. It was according to the nature of things that Bonaventura suggested to the poet the inner subjective side of Purgatory, and that Aquinas suggested to him the outer objective side thereof as a part of the Divine Order. But it was the poetic flash which bridged the two sides, making them into one complete process, and transformed the abstractions of the theologians into a grand mythical movement which is the eternal form of the purgatorial theme. Not the abstract utterance of the Reason, but the

concrete utterance of the Imagination is what reaches the soul of the people, and stays alive there. So Bonaventura and Aquinas live mainly in Dante, who has mythologized them back again into his wonderful tale of Purgatory, after they had previously theologized the Christian Mythos.

### PRIDE.

In the introduction we have given the tabular statement of the Seven Sins of Mid-purgatory, as they are divided by Dante in Canto XVII. The division is "tripartite," in fact doubly so; the first group of three is composed of Pride, Envy, Anger, which may be designated as the social sins, in which "the ill of the neighbor is loved" by the one who is guilty of them.

Pride is the primal sin, and the root of all other sins. Note the significant fact that Dante has placed it first and at the bottom, being the foundation which supports the rest. It is somehow inwoven with individuality itself; man, being born an individual, that is, being born himself and nobody else, is exposed to this sin. Individuality must separate, just in this separation lies the great danger. For man may carry this separation into a complete divorce from his neighbor and from God, while the true way is to overcome this primal separation and to form a new and higher union with the neighbor and with



God. In this sense, birth may be considered as the great original sin, which is to be overcome by the individual through Free-Will.

The old Mythus has stated the spiritual fact in declaring that Satan fell through Pride, which thus was the grand primordial sin in heaven. The dualism in the soul of the Universe, with its positive and negative factors is ascribed to Pride. The same dualism we trace in the soul of man, the little mirror of the Universe.

Pride, therefore, in its sinful form, separates this man from his neighbor, withdraws him into himself, is anti-social. It cuts him off from participation with his race, it seeks no reflection of itself in other individuals, it moodily retires into its own fortress and is there its own prisoner in the worst sort of captivity. It builds a wall between the man and mankind, which is the great sin not only against humanity but also against God, who is supremely participation. Assuredly this dividing wall of the soul is the first thing to be gotten rid in the purgatorial process.

Still we must see the good side of Pride, or rather the true thing of which it is a perversion. Every man has a right to his individuality, without which indeed he could not be at all. This is, therefore, his first right and the ground of all other rights. Nay, he must assert his individuality to the full extent of his ability, else what does he amount to in the world? A man has

character in proportion to the degree in which he makes his individuality valid.

But the Individual must assert itself, not against all, but for all; it is to be everything that it can be, in order to impart itself to others. Let the man develop his powers to their fullest extent; let him make himself something, then he has something to give. That is the greatest individuality which does not exclude, but includes the most. God is the most intensive Individual, and the most comprehensive.

Pride, in its bad sense, means the exclusion of the neighbor and the brother, by self-exaltation; the Ego, hoisting itself out of participation with other Egos, becomes solitary on its lofty perch; haughtiness (*superbia*) it is called. But the shutting out of your neighbor is the shutting out of God, it is anew the primordial revolt of Satan, and the beginning of Sin.

Truly, a great problem with every human being, who must ask: What shall I do with this individuality of mine? A whole world I have within me, heaviest of sublunary burdens, in fact, just the one burden of man. Somehow, it must be given away, yet retained; sacrifice becomes true possession. One has not himself, really, till he has imparted himself.

We may now discern three stages in Pride, as in all these sins. It is worth the trouble to think

out separately these stages, since upon them depends the purgatorial process.

1. The first form of Pride asserts the infinite worth of the Individual — which we may call good Pride.

2. The second form of Pride asserts the infinite worthlessness of other Individuals in comparison with the one Individual — at which point sin enters.

3. The consequence is that the Individual has come to deny the worth of individuality ; he has assailed his own selfhood ; his Ego has undone itself.

That is, Pride, in its very nature, is self-contradictory, self-undoing, absurd. Like all evil and sin, it is at bottom its own negation. Here is the infernal element in the Purgatory ; this sin must be served up to itself, must be shown as self-nullifying, comic. Thus we shall behold a touch of the grotesque in the present Cantica also, yet only a touch, a streak which vanishes.

The fundamental thought is that Pride denies its own universality, and thus denies itself. It refuses to recognize other Egos, thus in its very Egoism it refuses to recognize its own principle, which is the Ego.

The great question, therefore, is, how shall we get rid of this inner contradiction, this rent in the soul? The purgatorial process is given,

whereby man frees himself of Pride, truly a great and necessary discipline.

Of this process we note two sides, both necessary, each complementary of the other. The one is the movement of the individual toward repentance, the steps which he is to pass through, in order to free himself of sin. The second is the movement of the Divine Order to prepare the way and means, and then to receive him when repentant. Already we have designated these two sides of the purgatorial process as subjective and objective.

I. In the movement of the individual soul the poet gives three means, or examples by which it is moved.

1. The positive examples, the good men of the world, hortatory instances, which the soul is to take and follow. *Paradiso*.

2. The actual instances under discipline. *Purgatory*. Here the poet is in conversation with the spirits.

3. The negative, deterrent examples, those in punishment. *Inferno*.

Thus we have all three portions of the Divine Comedy present, yet the first and last ideally, while *Purgatory* is real here. The soul which takes these three conditions into itself, which is deterred by the bad, and attracted by the good, and accepts its purgatorial discipline, is ready for the great release.

II. This release at once appears in the form of an angel. Why an angel? A messenger of the Divine Order, which the man can now see, being freed of his limitation. Why just now? Because the man has asserted his infinite nature; he has transcended his weakness, his finitude, his sin; he has shown himself now as limit-transcending, and thus becomes one with the light from beyond, or sees it just at this moment. Angelology here takes the place of demonology, since in the latter the animal gets the better of the man, as we see in the *Inferno*.

Of this release from Pride we may also remark three stages :

1. The appearance of the angel, whose special function is to point out the passage upward and to take away one of the P's—here the sin of Pride.

2. Music and song—just the place for it, inasmuch as harmony is now attained, and indeed the supreme harmony, that between Man and Providence, between the Individual and Universal. This harmony is from beyond, yet is in the soul too.

3. The Beatitude, which puts that harmony into words, specializes it, so to speak, by giving to it words, of which the first is Blessed. Wherewith a transition is made, a new limit (sin) presents itself, which must again be transcended.

*Canto Tenth.* Three Cantos will now be devoted to the purgatorial process of Pride which is located on the first Circle or Terrace of Purgatory. The subjective and objective movements are given, as above indicated, and the three together constitute a little poem. What is contained in the Tenth Canto may be conveniently thrown into three portions.

I. The entrance to the Terrace is described: "We mounted through a cleft rock," and the path through it "moved from side to side," very winding and narrow, like a "needle's eye." Fluctuations, doubts, turnings of the soul are hinted in this passage; a time of dark tortuosity, which demands "some art" in the leader. Moreover, quite a little spell elapses, measured by the moon, about three hours according to most commentators. Then the poet reaches the terrace, which is measured in a primitive way, being in width three lengths of a human body, say 18 feet, from the wall on one side to the descent on the other.

II. Our attention is first directed to the wall which bounds the Terrace on the inside; it is "of white marble, and adorned with sculptures." Here then is Dante's place for Art, specially plastic Art. It gives the examples of humility, which the proud souls have to contemplate as a part of their purgation. So Art is purificatory, truly a catharsis, or may be made so.

The examples, or works of art, are taken from the three great sources of culture, Christian, Hebrew, Heathen. Moreover these examples are hortatory, they show the noble deed and incite to it, they appeal to the love of the good, not to the fear of evil. They are all celestial personages, everyone is in Paradise now, even the Heathen Trajan; it is indeed the picture of Heaven in the conduct of man. Note, too, that they are given for contemplation, they are ideal, not real; the grand attainment is in them held up before the striving soul. A most important phase of this discipline and of all true discipline and education.

Examples of Humility they are called, but we must mark what this Humility means, since there can be a true and a false Humility, as well as a true and a false Pride. The Humility which denies all self-assertion, all individuality is false, in fact self-destructive; on the contrary, true Humility must assert itself strongly in the world. What it is to counteract is that false Pride, which cuts the individual off from participation and pens him up in himself. Humility is really the recognition of the neighbor as the equal, it is not the denial or even the abasement of the individual. On the contrary you should place yourself high, the higher the better; but be sure to place your neighbor just as high; that is, accord to his individuality the same rights as you do to your

own. Thus in proportion to your own individual strength, you can assert that of others; in proportion as your individuality is weak, your Humility will be weak.

Doubtless the example supreme of Humility is Christ — the God becomes man, descends from divinity to humanity, and endures all the pangs of finitude. Yet on the other hand the strongest self-assertion in the history of the world is that of Christ; he declared himself to be the Son of God, and made himself the chief transforming power of civilization. But this mighty individuality is just what he freely imparted to others, giving himself indeed as a sacrifice.

The first instance is the one which we may call the Christian, that of Mary, and the picture is the Annunciation, the first act of the great drama of Christianity. The divine messenger says *Ave*, to which the Virgin replies: *Ecce ancilla Dei!* So both the divine and human sides come together, have one thought. The Virgin is taken as the great example of Humility, submitting to the divine, giving herself also in sacrifice; but her son is indeed the best example.

The second instance is taken from the Old Testament, and refers to David, perhaps the chief Hebrew of ancient times after Moses. David, though king of the land, danced before the sacred Ark (2 Sam. vi) when it was transported to Jerusalem from the house of Obededom the



Gittite — evidently a matter of national import. Michal, the proud queen, by way of contrast, was “despiteful and sad,” looking at her royal husband dancing in that way. Not a happy instance of Humility, in our judgment, is this of David’s; but let it pass. Far more interesting is it to note the poet’s catholic sympathy: “Do not keep your mind on one place” — look at the Hebrew and also at the Heathen examples.

Accordingly we shall pass to the Heathen instance here given, that of the Emperor Trajan, whose act of Humility is very dramatically told (a much better instance than that of David), and who is said to have been taken out of hell through the intercession of St. Gregory the Great just for this deed. So the good deed can save the Heathen many hundreds of years after death, and the walls of the Inferno can be passed. Thus the legend seems to react against the dogma of eternal punishment.

Such are the examples of the virtue of Humility, which belong to all people and ages. Dante has to look up at them as he passes, since they are sculptured on the wall, not under his feet. God, it is hinted, is the artist, who doubtless has a hand in every true work of Art, which must have in it a divine element, is indeed a revelation of the Godlike. If there be no such element in it, then it can only be some copy, perchance skillful, of something ungodlike.

III. We now behold those who are in the purgatorial process; the people are bowed together with the weight of their heavy burden; they look like caryatids, "with knees joined to the breast," a shape which makes Dante uncomfortable, with his sympathetic artistic sense.

Here we note the symbolism of punishment, the congruence of the penalty to the sin, which fact was also noted in the *Inferno*. The heavy burden is Pride, because it has not participation; the individual refuses to impart himself, and thus he has his whole self to carry, most irksome and ever-present. As he has withdrawn all of himself unto himself through Pride, so he is shown here, crushed, bent, rolled into a heap of flesh, instead of the free, upright man. Such is the infernal side of the purgatorial process. A touch of the grotesque, too, we mark; a kind of a monster appears in that caryatid, though only by way of comparison.

But these people accept their punishment as the means of getting rid of their sin, their weakness, their finitude; they have patience, though sorely punished, and seeming to say, "I can no more." They have not lost the Good of the Intellect, hence they turn at once this *Inferno* into a Purgatory.

*Canto Eleventh.* This Canto contains the account of the purgatorial condition. It is the grand discipline of individualism which stands in

the way of participation. No man is stout enough to bear up the weight of his own Ego alone and of himself; he needs Society, State, the whole Institutional World to help him, he needs God. So now we behold the main facts in this discipline: these souls are repeating the Lord's Prayer, repeating it in such a way that it is no longer a mere string of words, but it is paraphrased, interpreted, as it were, in the very form of the prayer.

Significant in the highest degree is the introduction of this petition at the present juncture. The Lord's Prayer strikes at the roots of Pride, of Individualism; it seeks to bring about harmony with the Divine Order; its aim is to foster participation and break down exclusion. It is the heart of Christendom; it has a most important place in the history of the world, we may well say; every one who lisps it, renounces, if sincere. To be sure, it is often a mere mechanical rehearsal of sound without thought, an abacada-bra; but that is not its fault. I cannot help thinking that Dante intended in the present case to renew its meaning for his readers by putting it here as the grand spiritual antidote against Pride, sin of sins. We too should look into this Prayer anew, and see what it means in the process of purification.

I. The first division of the Canto, therefore, is given up to this very important part of the pur-

gatorial process. We shall find that it contains in germ the Purgatory, we might say, the whole *Divine Comedy*. In correspondence with both it has three parts.

1. The first part is the appeal of man to God the Father, the humiliation before Him, and the thought who He is, and what relation He sustains to the weak mortal supplicating. In the first place, He is in Heaven, yet not "circumscribed," not in a given locality, not finite, but the universal spirit. Here we have a touch of the Paradiso, especially of the Empyrean, abode of God, who is not in Space and Time (*Par.* XXIX. 17, also *Par.* XIV. 30: *non circonscriitto e tutto circonscriive*). In the second place the proud individual is made to praise His name, to recognize the supreme Power and Wisdom, and therewith to supplicate for the "peace of Thy Kingdom," which "we cannot reach of ourselves with all our wit." Here the word *Peace* suggests the grand end of the Celestial Paradise, which thus rises up again. In this manner the obstacle between man and deity is removed, man participates in the Divine, seeking the great final harmony of the Universe. In the fourth place, the proud suppliant prays that he may "make a sacrifice of his will to thee, as thy Angels have of theirs." Wherein we note another glance up to the Paradiso, where the Angels are "singing Hosanna." Finally he asks for his "daily manna," the sus-

tentation of the spirit, which keeps him from going backwards "in this rough desert," namely, the purgatorial journey.

It is manifest that this part of the Lord's Prayer is celestial, it shows the Human turned toward the Divine, and becoming harmonious therewith. From it we are able to infer the Paradiso, whose outlines can be seen floating through it, and pointing beyond.

2. Next we come to the second part of the Lord's Prayer, which is much shorter, and pertains to man's relation to his neighbor. Very striking is the turn which Dante gives to the passage, which may be translated literally as follows: "And as we pardon to *everybody* the evil which we have suffered, so pardon Thou, Merciful One, and look not to our deserts." Pride is a sin which "loves the ill of the neighbor" (*Purg.* XVII. 113); the proud man here prays that he may receive the wrong which he has done to his fellow-man; that is, he prays for the penalty of his sin, asks for the purgatorial process, that he may be purified. Moreover, "look not to our deserts;" in like manner we must not look to the deserts of our neighbor, but be merciful, as God is merciful to us.

Thus we have the attitude to our fellow-mortals expressed in a prayer, which shows the purgatorial element. The two great walls of Pride, that between Man and God, and that between Man and

Man, are now broken down by the spirit under discipline. Such are the two positive elements of the Lord's Prayer, representing really *Paradiso* and *Purgatorio*, the end and the mean.

3. Now comes the third part, which pertains to the *Inferno*, and directs a glance at the negative principle of the Universe: "Do not put to proof our virtue (which is weak) with the ancient Adversary," namely, Satan, who fell from Heaven through Pride, who, highest of the Angels, refused participation with God and the Divine Order. "Liberate us from him," from his Pride, or if you please, from his individualism, of which he is the mythical embodiment. Fear of evil we note in the Lord's Prayer, as well as love of the good; it has the deterrent principle also, else it would not be complete.

It is worth while to note, in passing, that the Authorized Version of the New Testament transforms the mythical statement in the above passage into abstract theological terms: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from *evil*." Thus King James' translators had a tendency to theologize the Christian Mythos. It is significant that the Revised Version returns to the original mythical form: "Deliver us from the *Evil One*."

Thus we behold in this Prayer a wonderful symmetry with the purgatorial process. There

is first the look upward to Heaven, to the divine presence, which is in the Paradiso. Then there is the look to the Earth, the abode of man, where we behold the brother, who is to be forgiven, else comes the discipline, which is a suggestion of Purgatory. Finally there is a glance at the Adversary, whose home is in the Inferno. Thus the three Canticas of the poem gleam through the Lord's Prayer, are indeed unfolded out of it, in a certain degree. In it we can say are found Heaven, Earth and Hell, — God, Man and the Devil. The solution of the problem of individuality it contains in its way; what we are to do with ourselves is told, both in the form of exhortation and admonition; to do for the love of the Good is the highest and is present here; but to do for the fear of the Evil is not omitted.

The spirit of the Prayer is truly the eternal, and the main effort should be to transform it into life and conduct. The form is, however, temporary, finite, and runs the danger of becoming a mere mechanical lip-service. We pray it for our own sake, not for the Lord's; he does not need it, he is already performing what it asks for and more.

At the end of Dante's Paternoster there is what, we confess, touches in us a note of discord. "This last prayer" the spirits continue to pray, "is not for us," namely, the prayer for deliverance from the Adversary, "as we need it not, but

for those who have remained behind us," namely those on Earth and possibly those in Pre-purgatory. A most violent wrench to make the Lord's Prayer fit into a theological dogma! Theology held that the soul in Purgatory could be no longer subject to temptation, could not backslide to Satan, but was fixed in its limit of salvation as firmly as the soul in Hell was fixed in damnation. In such a case we may well ask why are these souls praying at all? Are they not still in a struggle with sin, which is Satan? The very nature of Purgatory rests on the infinite nature of man, he is limit-transcending in both directions, backwards and forwards. Here we note in the present instance, as in others, that the Christian Mythos is far truer and profounder than Christian Theology, and that Dante at his best is mythical and often at his worst is theological.

The idea of interceding "for those who have remained behind us," which is also in the same passage, is a beautiful and truly humane principle, in which are set forth the necessity and the duty of man to look after his weaker or less advanced brother. It is the counterpart of the second portion of the Lord's Prayer, as above given, in which lies the thought that man is to forgive the ill deeds of the brother. Yet not forgiveness alone is required, but also active interposition for those who need help.



II. Now we are to have a proof of the purgatorial spirit of the souls on this Terrace. Virgil requests: "Show us the shortest way toward the stair," and the easiest also, specially needful for Dante, who comes laden "with the flesh of Adam." How kind is the answer of these bowed spirits, whose suffering makes them think now of others, proud and disdainful though they once were, and still are to a degree! For they have not yet finished the struggle with their secret disposition, but are surely winning the victory. Mark it well; for we, who live in a great city, and, if not proud, are always in a great hurry, seem never quite ready to speak the helpful word to the stranger who has lost his way, and appeals to us for a little information. For which sin we shall have to suffer the penalty in Purgatory, being made to go slow for a time, and to consider the neighbor somewhat. Better take a little of the medicine now and here.

Moreover, we note that these proud people in their present condition wish for a touch of sympathy in return; they are eager to see the man Dante, and "to make him piteous to this burden." Desire to associate with human kind they show, no longer distant and haughty.

We now have three typical cases of Pride undergoing the purgatorial process, real instances we have to call them in contrast to the ideal ones on the sculptured wall. Moreover they belong

to the poet's century, and Purgatory in them becomes contemporary.

The first is an Aldobrandeschi, who embodies the pride of Family. "The ancient blood and the fair deeds of my ancestors made me so arrogant that I held every man in contempt," wherefore we may expect the tragic outcome: "I died of it." He is indeed a well-known specimen of the proud aristocrat, who is by no means extinct in republics. "Not thinking on the common mother," he kept himself aloof till he became nought, a mere individual outside of his race. Now he has to carry "this weight among the dead," which he loaded on himself when alive, and started on the journey which he is here completing. Yet he did not bear his burden aright while living, he had not the purgatorial spirit. We may mark for reference how emphatic is the idea of a future probation in the present passage.

But observe Dante, who goes along "with face bent downwards, listening." Dante had Pride, a good deal of it too; he had Pride of Family, and came by it honestly; one of his ancestors, an Aldighieri, is in the present Circle, as we learn from a later passage. We shall see that he, to a certain extent, takes upon himself voluntarily the discipline of Purgatory. Strong is the sincerity which can speak by its deeds, saying: Thus I too have sinned, and I deserve the same

punishment. The just judge condemns the guilty man, though it be himself, and inflicts the punishment, wherewith he at once gets out of damnation and enters the realm of purification.

Nor should the reader of this *Purgatorio* forget himself, or think that he is out of it; if he reads the book aright, he will often go, like Dante, with head bowed down, listening to the confession of these poor sinners, and in the proper Circle will cry out: There I belong, I had better be starting too, on this journey.

The next example is that of Oderisi, an artist, who shows here the pride of his vocation. This pride led him to a desire of excellence, which is certainly not damnable, but it also led him to disparage his competitors — not an uncommon thing among artists. He does not recognize his brother, but undervalues him, excludes him; “of this sort of pride here is paid the fee,” behold him bending under his load. Yet mark his purgatorial spirit; in spite of his disposition, he now sings the praises of his rival, and acknowledges the latter’s merit, perhaps over-acknowledges it, in order to give that Pride of his a drastic purge. Surely a great and universal vice of artists, authors, poets; you need but listen to a group of them talking about their brethren of the same guild.

This Oderisi launches forth into a strong sermon upon the vanity of fame, literary and

artistic, in the course of which he touches upon the names of several contemporary painters and poets. All are transitory; "before a thousand years pass away," where will this fame be? Vanished, yet not wholly so. For are we not studying Dante now, 600 years after his day, on a continent wholly unknown to him? Many thousand times more readers he has to-day than in his own age, and, to all appearances, the increase is to continue. Giotto, too, has a vast multitude gazing on his pictures around the globe, faithfully reproduced in ways of which the artist knew nothing. Thus Spirit rescues its own not only from oblivion, but gives thereto a universal new life, more active than ever, truly immortal.

Perhaps, however, Dante had a prophetic inkling of something of the kind, which he has hidden in that obscure allusion: "Possibly he is born who will chase both (the Guidos, distinguished poets of the time) from the nest" of their fame (l. 99).

The third example bears the name of Provenzano Salvani, whose Pride took the direction of assuming authority. Thus he seems to have been led to disregard the right of the neighbor, certainly one of the results of too great ambition of ruling others. He would still be down in Pre-purgatory were it not for one great act of humility on his part. In the market place of Siena, the proud

patrician begged the money to ransom a friend who had been taken captive in war. Such an act done here in life has a remedial power beyond, according to Dante. "This work relieved him of those (pre-purgatorial) confines;" the saving effect of the good deed does not end with death—surely a most hopeful view of the Supreme Order.

Such are the three examples of Pride: the first is that of birth, a gift of nature; the second is that of art, a gift of intelligence; the third is that of authority, which requires a gift of will-power. All are good in their place, all are bad if they transgress the limit. If Pride excludes the neighbor, it is a sin; if it recognizes him and takes him up, it is a virtue. It is quite possible that the poet himself shared in all three kinds—Pride of Family, of Art, and of Authority. When in office he must have felt his superiority, if it be true that he said on a famous occasion: "If I go (on the Embassy), who is to stay? and if I stay, who is to go?"

Peculiarly tender and fraternal is the touch in this Canto, written truly in the spirit of the Lord's Prayer. No assertion of self against the brother, but love and sacrifice for him; the limit of exclusion seems quite wiped out. This is what really requires strength of character; only the strong man is able to win such a victory over himself. There is no loss of individuality but a

mighty maintenance thereof, loss of individualism there is indeed, which ought to be lost. We must not fail to recognize the strong self-determination in true humility, which demands not the destruction but the affirmation of the individual.

Even a personal tinge we may trace at the end of the Canto, and doubtless elsewhere in it. Dante too will be "brought to tremble through every vein," by begging for protection and bread, by going "up and down another's stair," by many calamities and mortifications. Then he will truly understand the case of proud Provenzano Salvani: "Little time will pass ere thy neighbors will act so that thou wilt be able to gloss it." Exile, disappointment, humiliation, are to be his discipline for Pride, a Purgatory in this life. Thus Dante in the present Canto seems to show the true purgatorial spirit; apparently he has digested his misfortunes, and looks upon them as a training unto humility. Nay, not so; the volcano within him will break out again, and send forth its streams of lava, red-hot, even from the last heights of Paradiso. Poor mortal that he is and that we all are!

*Canto Twelfth.* We have just seen the actual purgatorial examples of Pride. The present Canto passes now to the deterrent examples, which are ideal and infernal, giving here a picture of Pride in Hell. This is the first division of the Canto; the second division will give

the rise out of the present Circle and the acceptance of the penitent soul by the Divine Order. Wherewith the subject of Pride is concluded.

I. Dante is still in the discipline; he and "that burdened spirit" move along together "like oxen in the yoke," till "the sweet pedagogue" Virgil, stops it, saying, "Let him go." Up, there must be more speed, much remains to be seen; so Dante erects himself for walking, "though my thoughts remained bowed down and humbled." Now he is to cast his eyes upon the pavement where are imaged the examples of Pride and its infernal punishment. Note the symbolic act: he is to look down upon them, nay to put them under his feet, and trample upon them. Very different is the suggestion of his attitude toward the sculptured images on the wall; to these he had to look up, and could not put his foot upon them.

Another art-gallery we pass through, and witness many shapes manifesting the penalty of Pride. All the past is introduced from its two main sources, Hebrew and Classic; it is an Inferno, not the real one, but pictured, giving its discipline to the soul ideally, the Inferno of History and Mythology, reproduced in Art and reaching the purgatorial man through the imagination. Like terrestrial tombs the sculptured monuments lie there, bearing figures hinting

death and the hereafter. Moreover, the chief figure is Satan, "falling like lightning from Heaven," thus in the very act of producing Hell. Giants too are here, Hebrew Nimrod, Classic Briareus, both of whom we met down below in the Inferno.

Such is the employment of Art by Dante; it becomes purgatorial, surely its true use. Not much amusement does it furnish now; it gives not much pleasure, but rather pain of a certain kind, which is purificatory. Nor can we call this infernal iconography beautiful, if taken by itself. Still it belongs to the purgatorial process, and cannot well be left out; Evil, Satan, Hell are seen to be a part of the grand human discipline, and therefore a true theme of Art.

We may now look at the peculiar form in which this small slice of Inferno is composed, as it stands quite alone in the *Divine Comedy*. Through thirty-nine lines, making thirteen *terzine* or triads of three lines each, runs the catalogue of these proud people in punishment. Very artificial it seems, the bare structure peeps out at every turn; here is, then, the exact, formal, mechanical Dante, quite in contrast to the other Dante, boundless, barrier-bursting, overflowing with mysticism and inspiration.

Following the poet's classification, which is hinted by the first word employed, we note three groups of four triads (three lines) each, making



thirty-six lines ; each group has its own cue or starting-word, which is repeated at the beginning of each triad. The last triad resumes in its three lines the three cues of the three groups. The sacred number three is thus wrought over and over into the structure, which becomes a kind of mathematical formula.

Into these rigid numerical moulds the meaning is poured or forced, which is also to be considered. Each triad states a single instance or fact marked off by itself, and these instances are taken from Hebrew and Classic sources, alternating one with the other, except the case of the war with the Giants, in the third triad. We should also notice the triple division of those here guilty of Pride — Angels and Giants, men and women, whole peoples. First is, therefore, the class of superhuman agents, headed by Satan, followed by the Giants, Greek Briareus and Hebrew Nimrod. Second is the class of human agents, alternating between women and men, the women being Greeks and the men Orientals, in which fact we probably have a right to see the greater importance of the woman in the Occident, whereof the indication in the Greek Mythus is particularly strong. It is true that Tomyris is an Oriental queen, but she reaches Dante not through Biblical, but through Greek sources, which start originally from Herodotus. Third is the class represented by two entire peoples, the Assyrians

and the Trojans, one Oriental and one Hellenic, both guilty of Pride and doomed to punishment. Such is the general outline of this total gallery, giving a series of works of art, each of which has a distinct motive and event, and forms a vivid picture. The strong plastic sense of the poet is shown by the manner in which he individualizes the supreme fact at a given moment in each case, but his thought, his universal spirit is shown by his grand mythical sweep which includes the Hebrew and the Hellenic worlds with characters superhuman and human, men and women, and diverse nationalities. Thus Dante the Great will show himself even in his little numerical strait-coat. Let the reader now think out for himself why the Inferno of the Proud was thrust into such a narrow, pinched poetical form, tortured as it were on the rack.

The kinds of Pride here punished are various. Pride against God is the first and most important phase, whereof Satan and the Giants are types. But Pride can lead to many other sinful deeds, such as blasphemy, violence, fraud, suicide. In the Inferno Pride is not punished in its own name, but in its deeds.

That Dante beheld an ethical purport in the Mythos, both Greek and Hebrew, is manifest from the use which he makes of these mythical examples. That he emphasized the ethical significance of Art can be seen from the meaning

which he puts into his picture gallery. Again we may state that Dante's Art is purgatorial, and his poem he conceives of as a discipline, as a purification.

The poet has now passed through the three stages of training in the present Circle: he has seen the ideal examples of the Humble and of the Proud; he has talked with the real examples undergoing the purgatorial process; hortatory, expiatory, deterrent are these three kinds of examples, representing Paradiso, Purgatorio, Inferno. Such is the mode of purgation for the individual soul; now we pass to the objective side of the process.

II. This is the taking away of the sin and the reception of the purified man into the Divine Order, the realm of Grace: all of which is designated by a series of symbolic acts.

1. "Raise the head; behold there an angel." Dante has mastered his limitation of Pride, at least for the present; he has asserted his infinite nature, he has shown the divine quality in him; see, the messenger of the Divine appears outside of him — "the beautiful creature clothed in white, in the face twinkling it seems as the morning star." The God within and the God without meet and recognize each other. "Come up higher," is the angelic word, henceforth the ascent is easy. The mark of the P is expunged by a stroke of angel wings on the forehead; note

that it had been inwardly taken away already, which is the fact that renders this external erasure possible.

2. Now is heard music and song, a chorus of voices, the utterance of the harmony and the unity of the soul with the Divine Order. Surely this is the highest theme of music, coming from the celestial spaces and lifting the spirit upwards. The poet marks the contrast sharply with the discords of Hell: "For here one enters through chants, there through ferocious lamentations."

3. Such is the emotional unity uttered through sweet sounds; next we are told what they sing in words: *Blessed are the poor in spirit*, those not proud, the humble. We shall again note that one of these so-called evangelical Beatitudes will greet the purified man as he goes out of each Circle to the next. Thus he is not only to listen to the Sermon on the Mount, but is to realize it in himself through the purgatorial process. When he has completed a given stage, a fragment of it floats down to him from Heaven, and gives to him its blessing, as it once came down from above through the lips of Christ.

Dante feels that some heavy burden has been lifted from him: "for almost no fatigue do I experience in going." The removal of the P from his forehead is the cause, then comes the promise of Virgil, that, when all the P's are

expunged, "thy feet will not only not feel fatigue, but it will be a delight to them to be impelled upward." For the root of all the P's, the primordial sin, has been extracted from the soul; yet Dante will show some fear of it still, as we may note in the next Canto.

### ENVY.

This is the second of the Seven Sins, and may be considered a form of Pride, since it too asserts the individual in an exclusive, negative manner. But it is also different from Pride; it recognizes the worth of the neighbor, of the rival, which mere Pride does not, but remains wrapped up in itself. So Envy springs from recognition of some kind of excellence.

But when it has recognized, it belittles and even denies the very thing it has recognized. Such is its peculiar trait: what it sees to be excellent it disparages and nullifies because of that very excellence. It thinks thus to assert its own individuality, fearing lest another's worth may stand in the way of its own. Here is the point where the sin enters. Man has the right to assert his own worth, but not to disown or to destroy the brother's worth.

It is clear that Envy, in assailing worth in another assails its own worth, for worth is what is assailed. Also Envy has perception of the good and

excellent, then it denies the same, thus denying its own sense of worth, its own knowledge of what is excellent. Thus it puts out its own light, the envious soul is suicidal. The career of such a person is to blot out his own intellect, which perceives the good, and to undo his own will which follows the good. If the man yields to Envy, in the course of time he will lose his perception of the good and excellent.

Envy, too, perverts the emotions. It feels joy at the sorrow of others, and it feels sorrow at the joy of others. The brother's misfortune is its good fortune, and it is tortured at the brother's good fortune. No sympathy, no participation, no recognition; unfeeling, unsharing, unseeing is the envious soul.

In Envy, therefore, we may note the threefold process as in all the Sins — positive, negative and self-negative.

1. It starts with the self-assertion of the Individual who perceives excellence, who knows the good, and declares it. The recognition of worth is this primal declaration or assertion.

2. But Envy, perceiving this excellence in another, denies it on the spot, will not recognize its own perception. This is the narrow, false assertion of self, and makes sin.

3. Thus it is self-destructive, destroying its own intelligence, its own capacity for seeing what

is good. The denial comes back to the person who denies, he puts out his own eyes, hence the poet's symbolism.

Let it, however, be said that there is a good side of Envy, or a good Envy, in so far as it is recognition of worth, and the self-assertion which lies in the same. Freedom from Envy does not mean that you should not recognize yourself in your full recognition of others. Indeed, all appreciation is, or ought to be a kind of self-manifestation or self-assertion. You need not get so lost in others that you do not see your own worth. Strong people are often envious and therein weak and foolish; stronger people are appreciative of others and therein show their strength.

Language has the idea of a good kind of Envy. "I envy you your gift of eloquence" is not disparagement, but recognition. Bad envy would belittle or deny it, declaring it to be not a gift, or not to be eloquence when it is. A wish for possession in such a case is not blame but praise (compare the French *envie*).

We must note that in studying Envy with its characteristics and penalties, that the etymology of the word was always present to Dante's mind and grounds his symbolism. *Invidia* (*in* and *video*) means the not seeing a thing; note too, that this signifies, not simply the inability to see,

blindness, but the refusal to see, the making one's self blind. So the envious make themselves blind to the excellence of others.

Pride cut the individual off from his neighbor, and locked him up with himself, inside his own prison; but Envy assails the neighbor, not by force but by intelligence, denying to him his spiritual possession, his worth, and in that way attacking him on the side of his excellence and because he is excellent. Thus Envy cuts the man who has it off from the divine life, from a recognition of the good and worthy, which is supremely God's trait. Hence it is a sin, causing a separation of man from the Divine.

Such is doubtless the meaning of the poet's symbolism of Envy, turning upon the lack of recognition. Herein he seems to go deeper than the theologians who hold that Envy is sadness at the good-fortune of the neighbor. Aquinas says: *Invidus tristatur de bono proximi.* (S. Th. II., Qu. 36, Art. 3). But Envy is more than the feeling of sorrow at another's happiness, though that too; it must first recognize and then deny excellence. Sometimes however, if we judge by the examples, it seems to mean hardly more than hate, to Dante's mind.

The purgatorial process of Envy will be unfolded by the poet through the same stages which we witnessed in Pride. The next three Cantos, nearly, will be devoted to this theme,



which will be rounded off like the Circle itself. The following table hints the outline:—

I. The discipline of the individual. — Subjective side of the process.

1. Hortatory examples — Paradiso — ideal — voices.

2. Expiatory examples — Purgatorio — real — conversation.

3. Deterrent examples — Inferno — ideal — voices.

II. The reception into the Divine Order — Objective side of the process

1. The angel appears who strikes off the P and points out the passage.

2. The utterance in music and speech.

3. Beatitude — *Beati misericordes*.

*Canto Thirteenth.* At the entrance to the Circle, the physical environment of Envy is touched up with a little color. The bank and the way are smooth and bare; no shadow or image appears; Envy has put out other life; the rock is of a livid color, like the envious person. But the guide turned his eyes fixedly to the Sun, which is not envious, but shines on all, on the envious, too, giving its light even to those who will not see — those having *invidia*.

Of the Canto we may mark off two distinct portions which give the hortatory and the expiatory examples, and form a part of the subjective side of the purgatorial process.

I. These hortatory examples, rousing the positive love of the Good, are now imparted not through external sight, as in *Pride*, but through the ear. Voices come, "spirits not seen but heard" with their invitation "to the table of love." Note the change. The eyes being sewed up cannot behold any pictures or sculptures, so another sense must be used. Hearing is a more internal sense than sight; it does not seize matter in its dimensions and at rest, but in vibration, in a state of trembling from the stroke outside, being already partly non-material in sound. Mark too that the voices are not of people present; these persons, Mary, Pylades, Christ are not here in Purgatory. But their voices are here, being immortal in the world, transmitted by literature. Voices out-of Time we may call them, forever speaking to the purgatorial soul which truly seeks to overcome its limitations.

Three of these voices now speak out of the air to all in discipline. First is that of Mary, saying "they have no wine" (*Vinum non habent*); which is derived from a Christian legend. It is said that the Holy Mother at the wedding at Cana, observing a deficiency of wine, moved her son to perform the miracle of changing water into wine. The second example is derived from heathen story, and celebrates the friendship of Orestes and Pylades, the latter calling himself the former and seeking to die in

his stead. The third example is Christ, speaking the world-transforming sentence, "Love your enemies," not merely your friends. Here is spoken the pivotal word, Love, the opposite of all Envy, as Humility is the opposite of Pride.

We may note a certain sequence and culmination in these three examples. Mary looks out for the material well-being of others with the glance of the housewife, the words of Pylades express the sacrifice which comes through friendship, those of Christ express charity, the universal love which embraces not only friends, but enemies. One thinks of Dante himself, banished and outraged by his enemies, yet trying to love them, and probably not always succeeding. An inner struggle of the poet's own—and this poem records it.

So the envious, as the first phase of their discipline, must hear examples of Love, the opposite of Envy, and follow them, to get rid of their vice, their limit. "The curb must be of the contrary sound," says the poet. The man who hates must practice love, and he who envies must show recognition. Dante's *invidia* seems to occupy the whole field between Envy specially and Hate in general.

II. Now we come to the expiatory ordeal for the envious. Their cloaks were livid, of hair cloth, Envy punishing Envy. Their eyelids were sewed up with an iron thread, for have they not

denied their own vision, refusing recognition? Blind now they lean, one against the other, needing the support of the neighbor, whom they did not recognize; Envy has cut off the mutual bond of man, yet therein compels it; "all were supported by the rock;" individualism is helpless. Envy has blinded them; but, being blinded, they must no longer envy their neighbor, but lean on him; thus Envy undoes itself. Then they are chanting litanies to all the Saints from Mary down for intercession; Envy has to beg the help of those who are not envious.

Very complete is this picture in which punishment again appears, being determined in kind and degree by the deed and the disposition. Evil is shown as self-undoing, Envy nullifies itself, blinds itself till it must have help and show recognition for worth. Yet these souls take their discipline as a part of the expiation, hence are not in Inferno but in Purgatory.

The special case here is that of Sapia, a lady of Siena, who was "more glad of other's harm than of her own good fortune." Her Envy brought her to that point at which she became insolent to God, saying "I no longer fear thee." Surely an outcome of envy and hate; the command is to love your enemies, in this Canto the supreme example voices: "Love them from whom ye have evil." But Sapia hated, and so defied God and the law, whereof she is now

paying the penalty. This penalty would be yet more severe, were it not that an humble Saint, Peter the Comb-maker, took pity on her, and interceded for the envious person, he being the opposite of all Envy. Thus he reaches over and rescues the victim of Envy against Envy. This Peter is still revered as a Saint by the Sienese, having risen far above the limits of Envy; his countrymen like Sapia may well adore him as one of their best.

Sapia shows in her first words that she has taken her discipline and is rising into the universal life: "O, my brother, each soul is a citizen of a true city"—the eternal city; as a pilgrim only, do we live in Italy or on the Earth. Not local or national is the soul, in truth, but human and universal.

The hate of Sapia went out chiefly toward her city; she rejoiced in its misfortune, even to blasphemy. Why did Dante take just this woman? Did he not have somewhat of the same feeling toward his city—Florence? Did he not unite with her enemies and wage war, upbraiding, denouncing, cursing her? Hard was it for Dante to overcome his hate of the country which he loved so deeply; Sapia is to a degree Dante himself, seeking to master his sin, putting himself into his own Purgatory. His poem is the record of the struggle with himself, his colossal effort to master his own finitude. Hence Sapia is here

the example, imaging a phase of the poet's own inner conflict.

*Canto Fourteenth.* This Canto falls into two main portions, which carry forward the discipline of Envy. In the last Canto, we had the hortatory examples, and began the expiatory ones in the case of Sapia, which are now continued, making by far the largest part of the Canto; but toward the end we have also the deterrent examples of Envy, coming in voices on the air, as did the previous hortatory examples.

I. The case of Sapia, the woman, was an instance of expiation of hate (*invidia*) toward her own country, which rose to insolence toward God. Now follows the cases of men, specially of Guido del Duca, who hearing Dante's conversation with Sapia, begs him to tell who he is and whence he comes. But the poet, in a vein of grim humor, will not even speak his own name, yet he mentions Tuscany and the Arno as his home.

Herewith the spirit from Romagna (Guido del Duca) begins one of the fiercest diatribes in the whole *Divine Comedy* against Tuscany and her people. He follows with bitter ingenuity the course of the river Arno from its headwaters to the sea, in order to designate the chief cities along its bank, whose inhabitants he likens to beasts of various kinds. First are the swine,

high up in the mountains, the dwellers in the Casentino; next are the Arentines, who are dogs, "snarling more than their power requires;" then the Florentines are touched, the wolves, of insatiable avarice; finally come the Pisans, the foxes, with deceit in their hearts. Prophecy, too, we hear, of a man coming, "like a monster antique," who will chase the wolves who are Florentines, and will undo their city, that "a thousand years will not restore it."

Such is the spiteful philippic, and we say at once that the speaker, Guido del Duca, is justly in Purgatory for his Envy. A Romagnole envying his neighbor the Tuscan: such is his character. Much discipline is he yet to have ere he can be purified. If Sapia hated her own country, this Guido hates his neighbor's land. Yet he confesses his sin: "My blood was so fired with Envy that if I saw a man become happy, you would see me with a livid color (of Envy) overspread." Hence his punishment, hence too that foregoing speech.

But what is the relation of Dante to these utterances? Not his own, directly, yet indirectly; he puts them into the mouth of Guido, still they are his, one of his many outbursts against his people. Do we not feel here the two Dantes in self-conflict? Hate drives him, and he yields, yet he puts it and indeed himself into Purgatory for hating. There is here not only a

sin, but a judgment, both by Dante himself; we might almost say, a judgment against himself by himself; a condemnation of his own bitterness toward Florence and other cities.

Now appears a second phase of the same sin, still voiced by Guido del Duca. This is the harsh disparagement of the time he lives in, and praise of the good old times. So Guido indulges in a fierce outburst of pessimism; he rejoices that so many worthy people of the preceding generations have no heirs. May we not also trace this to Envy, to a lack of recognizing the living neighbor, and a contrasting of his supposed worthlessness with the worth of those who are no longer rivals?

Again we ask, What is Dante's relation to the second philippic? It is his, yet he condemns it and puts it into Purgatory. Great is the struggle to rise above himself; but when he fails he inflicts the punishment. Still the spirit is not infernal: "O race of men, why do you place your heart where refusal of participation is a necessity?" The great object, then, is companionship, love, recognition. Still this Guido needs discipline; no wonder he has to be left behind now.

The second spirit here, Rinier da Calvoli, says but little, and seems not to hate so fiercely. The two men, however, represent the same thing apparently, the narrow hatred of other countries



and of the time — which hatred Dante evidently considers to be a kind of Envy.

II. The second portion passes suddenly from the expiatory to the deterrent examples, which are still needed to keep in restraint the purgatorial man and to hold him up to his discipline. Love of the good is first, but fear of punishment cannot yet be dispensed with. So Dante, and all of us are now to see the penalty of the sin of Envy.

The first example is that of Cain, given in a wonderful voice, “like lightning when it cleaves the air,” and darting down Time from the primitive family of man. Cain slew his brother out of Envy; a compartment of the Inferno is named after him, where, in the lowest Circle of Hell, his guilt is punished. Listen to that strange voice on the air: “Whosoever findeth me shall slay me.” Surely a deterrent example for all ages, sounding out of the earliest chapters of human history.

In contrast with this ancient Hebrew voice, is the classical voice: “I am Aglauros who became stone.” This Aglauros, the daughter of Cadmus, envied her sister Herse who had won the love of a god. Through Envy, let us say, the sisterly heart was turned into stone.

It is plain that these voices are not voices of persons in Purgatory, but of the past — voices of Greek and Hebrew story that have come

incorporeally down the ages and still sound through our earthly discipline. Cain, though in the *Inferno*, is nevertheless heard in Purgatory, as a warning. There seems to be some difference in the quality of the tone of these voices; that of Mary "spoke loudly," that of Cain cleft the air like lightning, that of Aglauros was as thunder; the last two are evidently more terrible than the first.

At the end of the Canto, Virgil gives the general theory of the Purgatory, which shows that to Dante the scheme and purpose of it were conscious. These voices of Cain and Aglauros "were the hard bit which ought to hold man in his bound." They are striking examples of punishment which ought to deter, but they do not; man still bites at the bait of the Adversary and is caught. The two great means—"the bridle and the recall"—avail little. The incitement through the good (*Paradiso*) and the determent through the penalty (*Inferno*) are not enough; man has to experience evil, has to have Purgatory. "Heaven calls you," but you turn to Earth; hence "he who sees all (the total cycle of the deed) smites you." The Lord has not yet abolished corporeal punishment in his school. In fact we see here indicated the three elements—paradisaical, purgatorial and infernal—which enter into the subjective side of the process of Purgatory. All are necessary for the

great training-school through which the poet and we are now passing, and which is to make the eternal portion of ourselves our daily possession.

*Canto Fifteenth.* Again the poet notes for us the time of day in his fashion — three hours past noon. Moreover the relation of this time to the total terrestrial cycle is suggested: “there in Purgatory it was afternoon, here in Florence it was midnight.” Also his position and direction are indicated: “we were going straight toward sunset,” and the rays thereof “struck us on the middle of the nose.” He is now half way round the semi-circular sweep of the Mountain, having passed through two out of the seven Circles. Thus he designates the point occupied by himself in Time and Space by a glance at Earth and Sun, which determine him externally to be just there and then, while on the other hand his mind rushes forth and embraces them in turn as they determine him.

In the present Canto there are three parts: the termination of the Circle of Envy, an intermediate explanation, and the beginning of the Circle of Anger, whose discipline is to be shown in a series of examples.

I. In the two previous Cantos, we have had the subjective side of the purgatorial process for the sin of Anger, with its three sets of instances. Next we come to the objective side of the same process, in which the sinful individual, having

completed the ordeal of expiation, is received into the Divine Order, which now manifests itself specially to him. We shall briefly note the three stages.

1. The angel appears, so intense was the splendor of the luminous being, that Dante had to shade his eyes with his hands, though the light was not direct but reflected. Its function is told: "it is a messenger who comes to invite people to go up." Moreover we hear the promise: "Soon it will not be grievous but a pleasure to thee to behold these beings;" in which promise the reader also is to share, when he gets acquainted with the marvellous strangers from beyond.

2. Song is heard, the voices chanting behind somewhere; probably an angelic chorus. Just a hint, yet enough to suggest a wave of music rolling out of the unseen.

3. The content of the song was the Beatitude: *Blessed are the merciful*. For the merciful are the opposite of the envious, who rejoice in the ill of the neighbor. Sympathy with the fellow-man in his misfortune, a feeling of oneness with humanity is truly the feeling of mercy. Such is the emotional side of this virtue, wherein the poet follows Aquinas who says: *Invidia opponitur misericordiæ directe*.

But Envy is also opposed to recognition, since it recognizes the worth of the fellow-man and then proceeds to belittle or deny the same. It

has an intellectual as well as an emotional side; it must be made to recognize as well as to be merciful. This is the only reason I can find for the second song in addition to the Beatitude above given. *Rejoice thou that conquerest* is also sung, which evidently suggests the virtue opposite to Envy, and completes what had been already sung. The envious man is to conquer Envy through recognition. In no other case throughout the Seven Circles has the poet made such an addition to the Beatitude. It looks as if he was not wholly satisfied with the opinion of Aquinas upon this point, and added something to enforce the triumph over Envy. Still it must be confessed that the words of this second song would apply to any Circle.

II. The poet at this point interjects an abstract discussion, of which the general purport is to show the exclusiveness of sin, specially of Envy. "What did that spirit of Romagna mean when he spoke of both refusal and companionship?" Really he confessed his own vice, which was Envy, whose nature is aloofness and disparagement of others' gifts. No companionship or participation; how does the man get into such a bad condition? Because his desire is for those things in which "a part is diminished by companionship;" that is, his desire is for material goods—terrestrial, not celestial things, for the latter can be shared without loss. But one can-

not have and give away his dollar at the same time. If the spirit, therefore, is wholly material, seeking only those goods which cannot be shared, it is sinful; it becomes envious in spiritual matters, transferring its own low nature to the highest things, refusing recognition to virtue, merit, excellence. Such is Dante's view of the origin of Envy: it springs from the soul bent merely on the getting of finite things.

Hence it is that we are to desire the things of "the supreme sphere," of the Empyrean. Celestial things, incorruptible, in which the greater the number of participators, the greater the amount to each participator; moreover "charity burns the stronger in that cloister," just because of this participation. In such manner individualism, which is the root of these sins, Envy included, is to be trained out of the spiritual nature of man. Freedom from Envy, absolute recognition of the other, is not only peace-bringing, but power-giving to its possessor, making him the unifying man among men.

But the statement causes a new difficulty in Dante's mind: How can a good, distributed among many, make its recipients more rich than if it were shared by a few or by one? "Thou dost fix thy mind on earthly things," that is, on sensuous appearances. Mark, however, the spiritual fact as here set forth by the poet: Divine Goodness flows out toward the man just in proportion

as the latter shows Love; "it gives as much of ardor as it finds;" the more Love on the part of man, the more on the part of God. On the one hand the souls of the Blessed are mirrors reflecting deity, which is the Sun of the soul. On the other hand deity reflects the love of these souls, which are also self-active beings, and the more souls loving Him, so much more is the sum of love for each soul. God unites all these individual loves into a vast reservoir of Love, and then returns it all to every individual. Thus there is a complete recognition and participation, whereby each obtains through God all. Desire, therefore, the good as your supreme possession, the nature of which is, the more sharers the more shared. In this way the root of Envy is torn up and thrown out of the world; man's highest end becomes just that in which all men can participate. Moreover man thus reflects the divine; the God within and the God without are one, being no longer separated by Envy.

Dante had already unfolded hints of these thoughts in his *Convito* (III. 12), which work of his often seems a book of jottings for his great poem. "No sensible thing in the whole world is more worthy of being taken as an example of God than the Sun," etc. Probably the first God to the primitive man was the great luminary of the skies.

III. The third portion of the present Canto

gives the transition to the next Sin, Anger, and the first stage of its purgation through the hortatory examples. Accordingly we have a new phase of sin, the special character of which is to be considered.

The first matter noticed is the changed condition of the poet, in which he is to receive the ideal examples of the purgatorial process; "I seemed of a sudden to be rapt into an ecstatic vision," which is his means of reaching the hortatory and deterrent instances, in the present Circle. Compared with the two previous ways — external vision for Pride and hearing for Envy — this way is more internal, being beyond eye and ear, and employing imagination with a kind of somnambulistic movement. We may also note that Anger takes away the power to see and to listen; still the purgatorial man is to have his training through an inner vision and hearing, while he is continuing his journey. Dante as somnambulist is shown in a little scene: "Thou hast walked more than a half league with eyes shut," yet seeing and hearing inwardly.

#### ANGER.

We have now reached the third Sin, which stands in a certain relation to the two preceding Sins, having a common characteristic with them, and also its own special trait. The man asserts



himself against the neighbor and brother to the injury or destruction of the latter, and therein assails his own principle. Individualism is the stamp of this Sin also.

But it has its own form. Envy denies merit in another, which merit it sees, and it rejoices in the misfortune of the neighbor; but Anger takes hold and produces the misfortune if it can. Envy remains a feeling or a thought, but Anger proceeds to action, and involves the will. Thus Anger is a step in advance of Envy in one direction, yet it is on the whole not so spiritual a sin as Envy, being less internal, since its tendency is to assail outwardly person or property, in sudden gusts more or less transitory. Envy, however, denies worth, denies the inner spiritual nature itself in its true manifestation, after recognizing the same. Anger in Purgatory is also a disposition, and not simply an outward act; the soul is to be purified of the angry habit, which usually underlies the violent deed.

Anger may be a superficial whiff of passion, but in its deeper purport it signifies requital, resentment, revenge. It is the giving back some deficiency, foible, folly to its possessor, or possibly some wrong to the doer: "Because he has done that mean thing to me, I shall do it to him, I shall pay him back in his own coin." The individual in Anger requites one evil by another evil.

Now let us examine the case. The requiter really assails himself, and undoes the very thing he seeks to do. In trying to assert himself, he loses his freedom; he is influenced to a course of conduct from the outside, not through himself but through another person. Thus he is not only bad but is also unfree; he surrenders his moral nature and his internal liberty. The person wronging him moves him to do a wrong, to do the very act which he has condemned as a mean thing. It is manifest that the individual in Anger undoes himself.

Yet there is a good side to Anger, a righteous indignation. A man when assailed has the right to defend himself, to see that he is preserved against a dangerous assault. His own individuality is committed to his care first, and it has the same right as any other individuality, not simply because it is his, but because it is individuality. Not selfish is true self-defense, but a universal deed, being valid for all men.

When, however, the wrong is done and past, man cannot requite as an individual; thus he starts the wrong over again. The State steps in, the institution which declares justice and the penalty when the wrongful deed has been done. Defense of self against an impending injury must be allowed; but this does not include retaliation, which cannot help the injured man personally. Righteous indignation at wrong is also a good

phase of Anger, though it may be abused by a false application.

In Anger we observe the three phases, which have been noted in the preceding Sins and which have been named the positive, the negative and the self-negative stages in the process of Sin.

1. Anger usually starts with the assertion of the individual; I am assailed in some way, and I rise in defense of my individuality. Here Anger has its right, the individual must protect himself, since he is entrusted with individuality as a principle embodied in himself. He cannot quietly let it be impaired or destroyed physically, morally, or intellectually, without a breach of trust. Positive phase, or good Anger.

2. But when Anger passes from the self-defense, which is really the defense of individuality, to assailing the individual, even though the latter may have done a wrong, then it becomes negative, assailing its own principle of existence in the other. Individualism assumes the form of sinful Anger.

3. Thus the individual turns against himself, and we mark the third or self-negative stage in the process of Anger. The angry man thinks that he is asserting self, but he is really assailing selfhood in the neighbor. Anger is blind, as the saying runs; it cuts its own throat, does at bottom the opposite of what it thinks it is doing. Thus it is self-annulling, with which thought the

purificatory process begins which is to free man of Anger, for Anger annuls itself by its own nature and brings forth the positive principle, if the individual accepts the penalty of his conduct and disposition.

According to Dante, this positive principle, the opposite of Anger, is Love, which never requites, but forgives, and thereby upholds the individual, allowing to the neighbor the same right as to self. Through Love man becomes the image of Reason, harmonious with himself, and can never be the Ego destroying the Ego in another, but always preserving and fostering the same.

The poet now treats of Anger, giving the purgatorial process thereof in the same manner as in the two previous Circles. The divisions of this process are as follows:—

I. The discipline of the angry individual enforced by examples: hortatory (1), expiatory (2), deterrent (3).

II. His reception into the Divine Order, which is manifested in the Angel (1), Voice (2), Beatitude (3).

We shall now go back to Canto Fifteenth and proceed to consider the third portion of it, which treats of the hortatory examples, those teaching the virtue opposed to Anger. As already stated, Dante sees and hears them in a kind of trance or inner vision. The spirit of the passage is that

of a sweet forbearance and forgiveness ; endurance of wrong, real or supposed, instead of the revengful passionate outburst, is the training here. One thinks of the poet himself seeking to lay aside revenge with heroic effort, for he was capable of angry resentment, as we see repeatedly in the *Inferno*, especially in the treatment of Filippo Argenti.

The first instance is that of Mary, mother of Christ, who is cited first in all these cases, being the primal embodiment of the spirit opposite to the Seven Sins, antedating her own son who is born free of sin and comes from a sinless source. According to the account of the Evangelist ( Luke II. 46.) she misses her twelve-year old boy and after an anxious search finds him in the midst of the doctors " hearing them and asking them questions." The mild reproof of the mother under provoking circumstances hints the total absence of Anger, yet a touch of sorrow. The second is the heathen instance, Pisistratus, here made famous for his mild answer to his angry wife, who demanded the punishment of a youthful lover for kissing their daughter in public. Yet it seems to be the wit more than the mildness of the answer, which turns aside the wrath: " If we punish those who love us, what shall we do to those who hate us?" The third instance is that of Stephen ( Acts VII. 60), the first Christian martyr, whose Love led him to

pray for his wrathful persecutors while they were stoning him to death.

It may be permitted to the thoughtful reader to observe in these three examples a certain gradation. The first is domestic, showing the manner in which the parent is to reprove the child; the second is political, showing the mildness of the ruler toward the subject; the third is religious, showing the attitude which the Christian is to take toward his enemies, even in the last throes of suffering. Examples from Family, State and Church are given here in order, whereof the last is grandest and includes all the others. The call of man to become a martyr, and therein to assert himself against his own nation and his old faith, is the supreme assertion of self, of the individual. Stephen did not defend himself physically, but against all he asserted himself spiritually, and thus showed his intense, veritably indestructible individuality. Through death he overcame death and so persisted in being.

Dante having seen these things inwardly, drawing them up from memory, seems like a man just awakened from sleep. He offers to tell Virgil the purport of his vision, but the latter has beheld it all. "If thou hadst a hundred masks over thy face, thy thoughts would not be closed to me, however insignificant." Thus the Guide is a sharer in Dante's mind and reads the same. A common vision they have in the spirit,

whereof springs their affinity. Moreover Dante hears the reason why these examples are brought before him: that he may "open his heart to the waters of peace which are poured from the eternal fountain," cleansing him of Anger. Whereby it is implied that the poet himself was in the purgatorial process for this Sin.

They now enter a smoke "little by little," which is the physical environment of the wrathful, typical of that inner wrath which settles into a disposition, obscuring the judgment and choking activity. In the Inferno the wrathful were plunged into the mud of Styx, a far more clinging and material element than smoke, which is in the air and impedes not the external movements of the body, while the Stygian mire weighs down and even hides the individual who is in it. Thus the infernal mud of wrath in which the man is lost, is rarified into purgatorial smoke, in which the man is struggling and is partially out of his sin.

At this point, too, we may note that the general schemes of the Inferno and Purgatorio begin to coalescé. Anger is in both, but not Pride or Envy, yet Anger is not in the same relative position in both. (See tabular statement in the Introduction, p. 64, and the discussion of the two schemes.) A similarity and yet a difference; we may consider the Anger of the Inferno to be more the deed of violence which has to be pun-

ished, while the Anger of the Purgatorio is more the temper, the sinful disposition which is to be purified. The symbolism of the two different surroundings (mud and smoke) points to the same distinction between infernal and purgatorial Anger.

*Canto Sixteenth.* Still in the Circle of Anger, of which the distinctively purgatorial portion is now given, showing the souls under discipline. There is still the environment of smoke, which not only takes away vision, but does not "suffer the eye to stay open," suggesting the blinding power of anger. Thus these people are put into their own world to experience their guilt. They are all accepting the consequences, and are "praying to the Lamb of God which takes away their sins." The lamb is the most unresisting of animals, type of the spirit opposite to wrath and revenge, surely the purgatorial temper; "of Anger they go loosing the knot."

In such a dense smoke there is nothing to be seen; but the voice can be heard, and Dante will have a remarkable conversation with one of the spirits here, Marco Lombardo, who "knew the world," and will now give some points of his experience with the same. We soon catch that his view is a gloomy one: "I love that worth for which each man has now unbent his bow." Possibly this is already a touch of that petulance and wrath which he is here expiating. A melan-



choly state of things; Dante in his response clearly holds the same opinion: "the world is indeed bereft of all virtue, weighted and overspread with wickedness." But now we are to find out the cause thereof, and Marco Lombardo will discourse upon three connected topics, of great interest to Dante and to us.

I. The first is a strong assertion of the Free-Will of man in opposition to the doctrine that he is determined from without by the stars. If this were the case, then "it would not be justice to have joy for good and pain for evil;" there would be no justice in punishment. In other words, responsibility goes hand in hand with freedom; Dante's *Inferno*, and even this *Purgatorio* would be monstrous structures of wrong, if man were not accountable for his deed.

And yet just here in the mind of the poet there is an entanglement of human Free-Will with the starry influences. "The firmament initiates your movements — I say not all," still some of them; a part of man is subjected to these fatal astral powers. But "ye are endowed with light and Free-Will," with which to overcome the stars. For there is "a greater power and a better nature," which creates in you a mind (*mente*) that "the firmament has not in its care." Hence the conclusion of the great moralist: "if the present world goes astray, in you is the cause." That is, man has a lower element in himself

which the stars can influence; but also he has a higher element which is beyond their control.

Such is the poet's disentanglement of Free-Will, the sole basis of moral obligation, from the meshes of judicial astrology. Little heed do we pay to this matter at present, but the Middle Ages had a very important problem just in these questions, for the belief in stellar influence was universal, and we see that Dante himself was not free from such a belief. Hence the necessity of introducing the subject at this point in order to strike at a lurking evil of the time. Astrology undermines the Free-Will of man and with it his responsibility for the deed. He comes to believe that he is purely the creature of external influences, and so gives up his inner self-control to temptation. Thus he excuses all his sins of the flesh and even of the mind, saying: "it is not I, but the stars." In such manner the moral self is dethroned and handed over to the spirit of passion and chance.

It is worth while to note that our own great poet has employed the same theme in a supreme manner. The character of Gloster in *King Lear* may be called an astrological one, being unfolded out of an implicit faith in the sun, moon and stars as the powers which determine human action. The result is, he excuses his moral violations as not his own, but as the influences of the heavenly bodies. He is not to blame, he thinks,

for the deed of lust, but some far-off conjunction of the planets. Thus he comes actually to believe his own lie, and through this belief his terrible punishment is prepared, giving him back his own moral blindness in the form of real blindness. Most subtly does Shakespeare trace in Gloster the psychological workings of a soul which has abjured its sense of responsibility by "making guilty the sun, moon and stars."

Perhaps every age has its own method of shirking moral obligation by denying Free-Will in some way. In Dante's epoch astrology furnished the argument, which lingered still in Shakespeare's day. In our own time the shibboleth is heredity; man has inherited his bad disposition, and so he is not responsible for the guilty deed, but his ancestry is, which ancestry seems to be somehow out of the way of heredity. Verily, there is a call for another Dante with a scorching from his *Inferno*, which rests upon Justice, the swerveless return of the deed upon the doer.

II. Marco Lombardo has thus asserted Free-Will against the stars; but this only leads to a second question. How is it that the soul thus endowed, nevertheless runs to the bad? The inquiry is thrown back to the origin of the soul, as it comes "weeping and laughing like a little girl, from the hand of the Maker." The problem is to account for that primal dualism into

good and evil which also comes to light in the soul of the child.

At first there is no such dualism. "This simple little soul, which knows nothing, turns naturally to what gives it delight, being moved thereto by its glad Maker." But just here the danger lies, it may run wholly after this delight, which is corporeal, "unless guide or bit turns aside its love" to something higher. At this point, then, the moral training begins, namely, the subordination of appetite, which is "a little good," to the spiritual part, which is the universal good. Such is Dante's conception; the first delight of the soul, "moved by its glad maker," is sinless, but the second delight, colliding with that which is above delight, is sinful, and man's battle opens.

Here this part of the subject is dropped, to be resumed in later Cantos which will still further unfold "the love" just touched upon. But that which is taken up and carried forward is the double discipline, "the guide and the bit," both necessary for the erring soul. The guide (or guidance) is what leads it to the good; the bit is what restrains it from the bad. The positive and negative ways they may be called, moving through love or through fear the individual, both being instrumentalities for an ethical life.

In many forms Dante will employ those two methods of human discipline. Just now he

speaks of the need of "law as a bit," and of the king as the one who administers law, truly the great means of justice in the world. Dante, or Marco Lombardo for him, exclaims: "The laws we have, but who puts his hand to them?" Who executes them? Nobody. Why? With this question we enter the third phase in the present discussion.

III. The reason which Dante gives to account for the perversity and corruption of his time is the union of the secular and spiritual power in one person, the Pope. "The Church of Rome, confounding in herself two governments falls into the mire and befouls both herself and her burden" (line 127). The pastor, who is to go in advance of his flock "can ruminate, but has not the hooves divided;" thus he is a single-hoofed, that is, an unclean animal, which men ought to shun. Therefore it is "evil guidance which has made the world guilty," and not the corruption of nature. Rome once had two Suns, but now "one has extinguished the other." In such manner the poet looks back to a former era of purity, which it is his object to restore. His plan is not a revolution but a return.

These dual forces, called "the guide and the bit," represented by the two Suns of Rome, the Church and the Empire, are very important elements in Dante's conception of the Divine Order. It is the function of the Church to guide through

its love; it is the function of the State to restrain through its law. They are the positive and negative powers, which are to train man to a universal life in an institutional world. By guidance and its sweet persuasion he is led to the good; by law and its stern penalty he is deterred from the bad. Undoubtedly, the first motive is far higher than the second; still, if a man will not do right through love of the right, let him do right through terror of punishment. Both means are employed in God's School, in which personal chastisement is not yet abolished, and from all signs will not be for some time to come.

In many forms the poet states the dual powers: Mercy and Justice, Church and Empire, Sword and Crook, God and the World, Guide and Bit, the two Suns of Rome; possibly, the divided hoof has a hint of the same meaning.

He employs both forces in the discipline of his Purgatory, two sets of examples are brought before us — the suasive or paradisaical, and the deterrent or infernal. Yet both are ultimately one power, that of God himself, bringing about the regeneration of man. Most emphatic is the statement here that the chief ills of the age spring from the ecclesiastical usurpation of political authority.

Herein the poet is again the prophet. The best and freest souls of the ages are striving toward Dante's goal — the separation of Church and State. Indeed the Time Spirit has unfolded

into just such an institutional order in America, the last born of the nations. To be sure, the outer form is very different from that which Dante had in mind; no such State as the Empire, no such Church as that of Rome, have appeared; still there is the same fundamental idea, however changed its special manifestation. Prophecy deals with the idea and not with the appearance in Time and Place, as its truth. The universal human Dante is the prophetic one; the particular Italian Dante is often badly mistaken, and otherwise very finite. The Dante of the 14th Century is an object of erudite curiosity, but the Dante of the 19th Century and of all centuries is the true Dante, whom we love and from whom we learn.

And now one word upon the conception of State and Church, the two great institutions which hovered before the mind of the poet through his mature life. The function of the State is Justice, which brings back the deed to the doer; the function of the Church is Salvation, which is to restore the erring soul after due repentance. The one serves up the finite to the finite and thereby destroys it—thus man perishes through Justice; the other also serves up the finite to the finite, but thereby passes to the infinite—thus man is saved by Repentance and Mercy. Punishment through the State is an outer process which undoes the man, at least for

the time being; Repentance is an inner process, which undoes the guilt and saves the man. Mercy is in danger of undermining Justice by shielding the individual from the return of his deed; so let the churchman keep his hands off the State. No doubt, on the other hand, mere Justice will slay Mercy, and with it will slay man. Church and State are two great branches of the one institutional order which seeks to elevate man out of a finite, sensuous, selfish existence into a true universal life. They must be kept separate, and yet in organic connection in the social whole; one must not absorb or usurp the other, else the world will lose one of its legs and will walk lame, or "fall down into the dirt." Such is the spirit of Dante's view, which shows him a citizen, not of his own time alone, but also of our time and of all time.

Marco Lombardo takes his punishment, nay, he wishes it for his own purification. So "I shall go no further with you," good-bye; I shall stay in this purgatorial smoke of wrath, being not yet free of it internally. He turns back, he is not yet ready to enter the dawn yonder, not yet ready to meet the Angel who is to give him his final absolution from his guilt. He accepts the penalty of sin here at the end of the Canto, and thus is in the way of freeing himself both of the penalty and sin together.



*Canto Seventeenth.* Three quite distinct subjects are considered in the present Canto: the rest of the purgatorial process of Anger, the beginning of the purgatorial process of Sloth, and a philosophical discussion of the idea and structure of Purgatory.

I. In the preceding Canto we beheld the man in the course of purification from the sin of Anger, the actual person and not an ideal instance; in the fifteenth Canto we looked at the suasive or hortatory examples; now we are to see the dissuasive or deterrent examples, the people in punishment for Anger. Then we shall pass to the second or objective side of the process, which will complete this Circle.

1. A touch of the smoky environment is still suggested, "like a fog in the Alps." Again the poet passes into a state of inner vision, in which he beholds the examples which follow. The first is taken from Greek story, being the case of Procne, who, in impious wrath and revenge against her husband, slew their son Itys, for which, according to the legend followed by Dante, she was transformed "into that bird which most delights itself in singing." Again we note the poet's tendency to an ethical interpretation of the Greek Mythos. Then comes the Hebrew example of Haman, on his own gallows, "angry and proud in his visage, and such he died." The third example is from Latin

story, the suicide of Amata, wife of Latinus and mother of Lavinia, who slew herself when she thought that Turnus, to whom her daughter had been betrothed, was slain in battle, and that Æneas would have the bride. Apparently a case of wrath against divine dispensation, with Rome in the background; which wrath led to self-murder.

In these three examples of Anger we may note distinctions. Procne seems animated by mere vengeance against her husband for violating a domestic tie, which causes her to commit a still deeper violation of the domestic tie. Haman has a motive something like pure malice springing from political and religious hate; he wills to slay others, and is slain by the very instrument of his own construction. Amata, trying to prevent the divine destiny of Æneas and Rome, helps to bring it about by her suicide. Family, State, and perchance the World's Order are seen to rise in succession.

A second element of comparison is the manner of their deaths. Procne is transformed into a lower being out of the human, her punishment coming from the gods. Haman erects his own gallows, his punishment coming from his king; Amata punishes herself for her wrath. Possibly a Greek, Hebrew and Roman tinge of thought we may note in transformation, retribution, suicide. This probably carries the matter beyond

the poet's intention, but not beyond his instinct, which is his truth.

2. The next is the objective part of the purgatorial process of Anger. The vision ceased, a new light "struck me in the face." The Angel appeared and said: "Here is the ascent." The Angel is verily the light shining from beyond, the messenger and representative of the Infinite, which now comes forth—"the spirit of God who is directing us on the way up." Dante is ready to ascend, the spirit within corresponds to the spirit without. Man is the limit-transcending being, is also an Angel at times, having the gleam of the Infinite breaking forth from the Finite. Then he can behold the Angel, and not till then. Next comes the Beatitude: "Blessed are the peace-makers," since they are the undoers of wrath in the world—"are free of *bad* wrath," for there is a good wrath, as already indicated. This time the music is omitted; no song for Wrath, as for Pride and Envy.

II. Dante has passed out of the Circle of Anger, the fog has vanished, yet night comes on with the appearance of stars. Of a sudden he feels his power of locomotion to be drooping away: "The might of my legs I felt to be placed in truce." It is manifest that the poet has entered the realm of Sloth, "the love of the good lame in its duty." This is the fourth vice or Sin in the Dantean System, and to it we may devote a few words.

## SLOTH.

It is the intermediary vice lying between the three above it and the three below. In the present Canto Dante himself has called attention to this tripartite division (line 138) under and over Sloth and including the same. All the Seven Sins are some form of the abuse of Love; the first three (Pride, Envy, Anger) are the love of self which excludes in some way the love of neighbor actively; Sloth is the love of self which paralyzes the duty to neighbor, does not suffer its victim to be active for his neighbor. Sloth is also related to the three sins above itself (Avarice and Prodigality, Gluttony, Carnality), since it is also a self-indulgence, an individual vice, making the man indifferent to good works on account of the bodily labor involved. We may call it a sort of transition from active to passive sin, the point of equilibrium between them.

Yet we may also note that there is a good side even to Sloth. There can be too much activity, a breaking over the limitations of the mind and body. Good Sloth refuses overwork, but accepts work, bad Sloth refuses work and may misname it over work. That is, Sloth may be a true assertion of the right of the individual (though it is not the correct word in such a case). In like manner, there may be an excess of the opposite of Sloth, too great haste, too great activity. We

are to observe the three stages of this vice as of those preceding it.

1. The first form of Sloth is a love which asserts the right of the individual, a right to his own time, and to the manner of its employment.

2. This, however, becomes negative to the man when it paralyses his activity for the good of his neighbor and of himself.

3. Thus Sloth as vice shows the individual destroying himself through a love of himself, of his ease. The Ego in Sloth as in the other sins is self-contradictory.

Next in order would be the purgatorial process of Sloth, the process by which the human being is to get rid of such a vice. Dante himself feels this Sloth as he goes through its Circle; he experiences in his person the offense here purged. Possibly too the metaphysical discussion which follows is a part of the penalty of Sloth, certainly it puts to severe trial the slothful thinker.

III. The first source of the ethical nature of man is Love, "Neither creator nor creature was ever without Love." Then the first act which is called natural Love "is always without error." So we have noticed the first stage in all these sins is good. But in the second stage, which is of the mind, man can err in two ways — "through a bad object, and through too much or too little vigor." This bad object seems to be the main characteristic of the first three vices ;

the deficiency or excess of vigor is the characteristic of the last four vices. At any rate we are to bring away from the discussion this important lesson: "Love is the seed in you of every virtue, and of every operation which merits punishment."

Thus we have come back to the unity of good and evil, in fact to the unity of the whole purgatorial process. The first step is good, in the second step the dualism into the good and bad enters.

Moreover, the individual cannot truly hate himself according to Dante, nor can he hate God; Love cannot hate Love, nor hate its own source, which is deity. That is, the two sides of the universe — Self and God — cannot be hated. "It remains that the evil which is loved is that of the neighbor;" man cannot love ill to himself or to God, but he can love ill to his neighbor, "and this last love (of ill to neighbor) is born in three ways in your clay." Here follows the division into and definition of Pride, Envy and Anger, "this three-formed love is lamented below." Then there is the love "which runs to the good with broken order;" that is, a love too slow in beholding and in acquiring the good, whereof the penalty is this cornice of Purgatory. Then there is the third division, the good which is finite, "which cannot make the man blessed," which "is not the good essence," namely God, who alone, according to Aquinas, is *bonus per suam*

*essentiam*, the universal Good, "root and fruit of all good." Now the love which abandons itself too much to this finite good "is lamented above us in three circles." "But how it is three-fold" is not now to be given, the reason of its triplicity is not here discussed.

Thus we have an outline of the classification of the vices of the Purgatory. Three in one, and one in three is the law.

1. Love of the ill of the neighbor { Pride.  
Envy.  
Wrath.
2. Love of good — too slow — Sloth.
3. Love of good which is not the good { Avarice and Prod.  
essence. Gluttony.  
Carnality.

Such is the organization of Purgatory, quite corresponding to the organization of Hell in Canto XI. of the *Inferno*. The present Canto is just in the middle of the Purgatorio—sixteen Cantos are before it and sixteen after it. Thus it is intermediary, like Sloth, of which it treats, and which is intermediary between the Seven Sins. The present Canto glances backwards and forward, giving also the source of virtue and vice in their primordial oneness. In all these matters we must be struck with two things: how intricate and well-bethought is the construction of this Purgatory, and secondly how it is all traced back to abstract thought. Surely here is philosophy in poetry.

The system which Dante follows is mainly that of Thomas Aquinas. The latter's *Summa Theologiæ* now is the real guide, though its mouth-piece be Virgil. Yet a transformation too we note, somewhat as the *Æneid* was transformed in the *Inferno*. May we not say that the *Summa* becomes here the theological or Christian basis of the poem, into which the dry scholastic utterance is marvelously transmuted for all time? What is the secret of this fresh metamorphosis? No longer an abstract proposition, but a life, a personal experience; theology becomes dramatic, full of action and yet remains theology in its new garb. Aquinas is transformed into a Mythus, veritably a great feat in the poet. As the mythologic monsters of Greece and Rome become infernal, after passing through Dante's imagination, so the *Summa* of the Angelic Doctor becomes purgatorial, being mythologized not from ancient story but from the abstractions of thought. Yet not wholly is this Dante's work; time had given him the outlines of a purgatorial Mythus also. Very interesting is it to note the interplay between the poet's theological and mythical tendencies.

The general distinction, however, as it is unfolded above, goes back to St. Augustine, one of whose pithy sentences runs: *Sicut virtus est amor ordinatus, sic vitium, amor non ordinatus*. The latter is clearly Dante's "love which runs to the



good with broken order (*ordine corrotto*).” The best commentary on this passage is that which goes under the name of Dante’s son, Pietro Dante: *Inordinatus ergo amor magni boni est, si sit modicus; et iste amor est radix accidiæ. Amor vero parvi boni est inordinatus, si sit nimius, et iste est radix gulæ, avaritiæ, et luxuriæ.* (cited by Scart. *Purg.* XVII, 95). That is, the love of the infinite Good (as God) must be infinite, else there is Sloth; on the other hand, the love of a finite Good (as riches, good eating and drinking) must be finite in proportion, else there is avarice or gulosity. The content of the Love must be adequate to its form, else there is Love out of order (*amor inordinatus*), which is Dante’s “broken order” (line 126).

The passage cited above from St. Augustine shows that he too traced virtue and sin back to Love as their common origin. The thought took strong hold of Aquinas, from whom mainly it passed to Dante, who pored over it in many passages of the *Summa*, of which one may here be set down in the subtly constructed Latin: *Omne agens, quodcumque sit, agit quancumque actionem ex aliquo amore.*

At the time of writing the present Cantica, Dante must have gone deep into Aquinas, whose book he indwelt, absorbed, transformed with as much love as he had once shown to Virgil’s *Æneid*. Even stronger traces of the *Summa*

we shall again find in the next Cantica, the Paradiso.

*Canto Eighteenth.* The metaphysical discussion which began in the preceding Canto continues, inasmuch as the bottom of the matter has not yet been reached. Thus the treatment of the special sin (Sloth) is picked up again, it having been dropped for a time in order that the universal sin underlying all Purgatory be duly set forth. Accordingly the present Canto falls into two very distinct portions: the metaphysical discussion and the objective side of the purgation of Sloth.

I. Dante asks of his guide that "thou demonstrate to me Love, to which thou dost reduce all good working and its contrary." Such is the starting-point, Love, which was assumed in the previous Canto and unfolded into the purgatorial structure there given, but which must now be "demonstrated," that is, must be grounded and explained. Not a poetic description is called for, but a philosophic demonstration, which is also an organic part of the great poem, according to Dante's conception thereof. No phase of the spirit's activity can be left out of it, otherwise it would be incomplete; it must be reflective as well as instinctive, philosophical as well as mythical.

In the following discussion are two leading points: an analysis of Love as the source of all

good and evil actions, and an explication of Free-will or the power of choice, through which morality begins in man.

1. The mind is endowed at its birth with a gift, "it is created ready to love," and it is accordingly "movable to everything which pleases it." Such is, then, its primordial trend; it goes toward its pleasure, and this going forth is Love in the first form.

The poet now gives a minute analysis of the psychological process of Love, phrased after scholastic Aristotelian philosophy. Your apprehension (or conceptive power) draws an image (*intenzione*) from some outside reality and unfolds that image within you so that it makes the mind turn towards that. Then if the mind bends towards the image, "this bending is love," and the mind "does not rest till the loved object makes it rejoice" by some sort of possession. The process here given by Dante we can group in three stages: the picturing of the thing by the mind, the bending toward the same by the mind, the getting of the thing; or, apprehension, inclination, possession.

Such is the analysis of that Love which is always good at first, as it seeks the good. Still in the second stage it may become bad by a bad object, or by excess or deficiency (see previous Canto). Now the difficulty arises: Love, in all these cases, seems to come from without, to be

moved not through itself but through something external. If, then, all actions spring from Love, are they not externally determined, a matter of necessity, and hence not subject to praise or blame?

2. Such is Dante's doubt, and it leads to the second discussion under the present head, which turns upon the question whether man, being moved by Love, can have Free-Will and hence responsibility. Dante implies that there is a dark point here, a limit beyond which he cannot penetrate: "All that Reason sees here, I can tell thee; beyond that point wait only for Beatrice, for it is a work of Faith." Thus the old-new battle between Faith and Reason was raging already in the soul of Dante, and was only to be tempered down a little by a truce for the time being, and a promise of future enlightenment.

Now for the argument. Again Dante asserts strongly as his starting point that the first or instinctive Love "has no desert of praise or blame." Furthermore man does not know whence come the first cognitions or the first desires, or what causes them; they "are in you as the impulse to make honey is in the bee." Only the effects can be perceived, "as life in a plant is perceived through its green leaves." So is manifested the soul of man, which is "substantial form;" which word means, in scholastic language, not the form but the essence, namely that

which forms the thing — not the passive result but the active principle. This “substantial form” is not perceived in itself “but in its effects,” one of which is “the first Will,” or the Love already mentioned, in its primal manifestation.

The next step is to pass from instinctive to deliberative volition; in the latter Free-Will enters, which has the element of choice. Merit and blame begin with the principle of choosing. But what chooses? “Innate is the virtue which counsels,” which deliberates first and then makes the selection. Mark this deliberation or weighing of the Intellect: it must be joined to the Will before the latter can have any moral quality, for “the first Will,” which is merely instinctive, has no “cause of deserving in you.” Thus Dante seems to make Free-Will, though innate, a composite of two elements, the deliberative and the active — a synthesis of man’s two supreme powers, namely, thinking and doing. For his doctrine he appeals to the great philosophers, “those who in reasoning have gone to the bottom” and therefore “have left to the world a science of moral philosophy (*moralità*).

Once more the poet recapitulates: “Hence let us posit that every love arises by necessity, but the power of controlling it lies in you.” The first love (or volition) is unfree, is a neces-

sity ; but the second being endowed with the addition of deliberation and assent, becomes Free-Will, which Dante elsewhere (*De Mon.* I 14) calls the greatest gift of God to man.

Such is the philosopher, who lets himself be seen in the poet, and organizes consciously the metaphysical groundwork of his philosophy into the fabric of his poem. Dante was not afraid of making his readers think, nor did he deem that his art demanded that his poetic structure should be carefully hidden. Subversive of many an æsthetic theory is this *Divine Comedy*, and still it persists in living and holding its rank.

But philosophy has its limit for Dante even here; it cannot explain everything, but has to call upon Beatrice and the gift of Faith. There is a point where origins run back into the unknown: What is the origin of the first appetite, of the first perception? Then follows the question of questions: What is the origin of evil? We may say that it is born of Free-Will, "God's greatest gift to man;" yet that only throws the matter a little further back. Why should Providence give to man such a dangerous power of choice? Philosophically Dante does not pursue the subject, but refers it to Beatrice; mythically, however, he answers the question. Indeed his poetic mythus is at bottom just the solution of that dualism usually called Good and Evil.

II. The second portion of the present Canto

passes to the consideration of Sloth. This subject was interrupted in the previous Canto by the long abstract discussion, which has just been set forth, and which seems to give the atmosphere of somnolence to this part of the poem. The author appears to hint the connection in a passage: "I, who had gathered his reasoning, stood like a man who wanders somnolent." Metaphysical dreaminess has its home here in the Circle of Sloth. "But this somnolence was suddenly taken away from me by people who behind our shoulders had already turned toward us." Life we are now to have and not abstractions; the dramatic, not the philosophic.

Previously the general view of the purgatorial process of Sloth was stated; now we are to hear the details, which are organized in the same way as in the other Circles. First is the subjective side of the process with its three kinds of examples — hortatory, expiatory, deterrent.

A great crowd is rushing forward with "a frenzy and a trampling" like the Bacchic worshippers of Thebes. They are the purgatorial people here, not now dilatory, "whom good Will and just Love are riding" with considerable vigor. In the grand rush all are seeking to overcome Sloth, the crowd itself was an incentive to each individual; "that mighty rout was moving at a run," evidently with mutual emulation and encouragement.

Note now the manner in which these examples are imparted: Two in front of the great running multitude "shouted them weeping." In *Anger* the examples were seen in a dream or by inner vision; here they are spoken in a loud voice by the two foremost (and hindmost) spirits, evidently from memory, hence these uttered what they already know. Observe the psychological order from the First Circle to the present one; outer vision, hearing, inner vision, memory (or knowledge). The last is the most internal of all; the soul itself now utters the examples, hitherto it received them from the outside.

1. The first hortatory example is Christian and is taken from Mary's life as usual: "Mary ran with haste to the mountain." The allusion is commonly supposed to refer to the visit of Mary to Elizabeth recorded in *Luke* I, 39. Far better is it to consider the passage as an allusion to the flight into Egypt (*Matt.* II, 13), with some of the old commentators.

The second or heathen example is taken from the speed of Cæsar, who, "to subject Iberda, stung Marseilles and then hastened to Spain," in order to secure the foundation of the great secular Empire.

Between these two examples we can note a connection, inasmuch as they may be taken to suggest the beginnings of the Church and the Empire, the religious and the political instru-



mentalities of the Divine Order, according to Dante's conception. One is, however, the pacific and affectionate mission, the other is the warlike and terrible, hinting the contrast between Mercy and Justice. Both deeds have to be done in haste, seizing the nick of opportunity, which Sloth is sure to let slip. World-historical are both examples, particularly if the first be the flight to Egypt, which saves the infant Jesus. Mary's visit to Elizabeth does not somehow stand well alongside of Cæsar's enterprise.

2. The expiatory example is the abbot of San Zeno at Verona in the time of Barbarossa. He is now atoning for the vice of Sloth, the great vice of the clergy, specially of monks. He speaks in his own name, apologizes for his haste, and reproves a wrong of the time. Some hint of Dante's stay at Verona and of his relation to the house of Della Scala lies in this example. Here the point of the rebuke is turned against the political element (State) for interfering with and corrupting the ecclesiastical element (Church).

3. The deterrent examples are now spoken by two souls in the rear, hastening forward, as it were away from the people whom they cite as instances. Note the correspondence between the two in front giving examples for imitation, and the two in the rear giving examples for deterrent—the one set evidently looking forward,

the other backward; the first moved by love of the good, the second moved by terror of the evil.

From sacred and profane history the examples are taken, now of whole peoples. First is the example of the Israelites in their flight from Egypt; all of them (except two) had to die before their descendants crossed the Jordan, on account of their Sloth in the wilderness—Sloth including here cowardice, backsliding, refusal to believe in and act upon the promises of God. The second example is that of the companions of Æneas, who preferred to remain in Sicily, and gave up the great voyage to Italy on account of “accidia,” and thus threw away their share in the making of Rome and the empire.

These two enterprises, most significant in the history of the world, the founding of Judea and of Rome, are renounced through Sloth by certain people, who therein make “the grand refusal.” The individual gives up his inheritance of the ages, namely his opportunity to be part of the great event; Sloth is the vice, a combination of indolence, cowardice and want of faith. Indifferentism we may call it, certainly a sin, particularly so in presence of the pivotal occasion. It comes home to all, for the humblest can share in the mightiest occurrence; not the hero alone but the people are the makers of the world-historical deed, and must not renounce their participation.

So we have two peoples, or fragments thereof, cited as examples, not individuals.

*Canto Nineteenth.* At the beginning, middle and end of Mid-purgatory (Cantos IX, XIX, XXVII,) Dante has a dream, which also suggests a correspondence of structure in the Cantica. This dream is, in general, an unconscious foreshadowing of what is about to happen to the poet consciously. In the present Canto the first part will be the dream; after this the completion of the purgatorial process of Sloth will be indicated; then will follow the beginning of the Fifth Circle, that of Avarice and Prodigality.

I. A little before dawn, "when the heat of day can no longer warm the cold of the moon," the hour of dream-rule, when the sun of consciousness has the least influence on the man, two women appeared to Dante in sleep.

The first was "stuttering in speech, with eyes askint, distorted in her feet, with hands maimed, and pallid in hue." To this bodily ugliness corresponded her mental perversity. Such she was in herself; but behold! at Dante's look she straightens up, her tongue becomes agile, and her hue "such as Love wills it." Then she begins singing with such charm that "with difficulty I would have turned my attention away from her." She tells who she is, she belongs to Homeric mythology: "I am the sweet Siren who turned Ulysses out of his course." The dream thus hints

the infatuation which transforms the ugly female monster into an enchantingly beautiful woman. Still further it hints the two sides of all sensuous pleasure, the charm and the disillusion.

The second dame now appears, "holy and ready" for work, inasmuch as she (or possibly Virgil) seized the first woman, the Siren, "and opened her in front, cleaving her garments," thus bringing to light all the foulness concealed under the fair exterior. Whereat the poet awoke.

The general purport of the dream is plain, as well as its relation to what follows. The first woman represents sensual enjoyment, the second represents the suppression thereof by the higher element — be it Grace or Reason. Moreover, we can mark herein the two main stages of the purgatorial process — the sin on the one hand, and the getting rid of it on the other. The Siren is in a general way the pre-figuring of the vices which follow — Avarice and Prodigality, Gluttony, Lust; the Saint (or second woman) is the embodiment of the opposing virtues which conquer in Purgatory. Still further, the contrast between Heathen and Christian is hinted in the two women who are called the Siren and the Saint. Dante, however, does not report aright his elder brother, Homer, in the story of the Siren, inasmuch as Ulyses is not turned from his journey by her, but meets her and hears her song, and, by a cunning scheme, really overcomes her en-

chantment. Homer, too, in his way is ethical, and shows the Siren thwarted by his hero.

Through the dream it is hinted that the struggle between Appetite and Reason (or Grace) dwells deep in the unconscious nature of man, manifesting itself in the time of sleep. Also the hope is given that the higher element will triumph. The poet himself suggests the interpretation of his allegory (line 58): "Thou (Dante) hast seen that ancient witch (the Siren) who alone above us ever is bewept; thou hast seen how the man frees himself of her." Here the three Circles "above us," as well as the process of purgation, are evidently in the poet's mind.

Three nights Dante passes on the purgatorial Mountain; each night after a time of sleep he dreams — probably a psychological fact in his case. A part of his soul's life is the dream, with its foreshadowy outlines of the future, in each case toward morning, when the body has had its rest from the previous day's fatigue, and the man lies in the mystic borderland between sleeping and waking, between night and day, between past and future. Then the soul takes wings and gets an outlook on what is coming; so Dante dreams always, when he sleeps.

II. In the previous Canto we had the subjective side of the purgatorial process of Sloth with its three sorts of examples. When the poet

wakes from his dream, he finds himself still in the Fourth Circle, with the objective side of the process still to be given. This he dispatches in a few lines, without marking any sharp distinction between the three phases. Yet the distinction is present, and must always be noted as an essential part of the organism. Did the poet already feel that his scheme was becoming too formal, and thus seek briefly to dismiss it?

1. First is the Angel, who suddenly appearing, says: "Come, here is the passage." Dante was moving along, bent over like the man "who makes of himself a half-arch of a bridge," which is probably intended as a slothful attitude. Yet Boccaccio says that the poet had naturally a stoop of that sort: "When he had arrived at mature age, he walked a little curved." (Life of Dante.) The poet himself states (line 55) that it was "suspicion" on account of the new vision, which bowed him thus. But the exhortation of Virgil hints at Sloth, and rouses him to "stretch himself forth," like the falcon at the cry of the falconer.

2. No music or song is mentioned, the angel, however, "moved his pinions and fanned us," and then uttered the Beatitude, possibly in a chant. For his speech was "in a measure sweet and benign, such as is not heard in this mortal confine."

3. The Beatitude is *Qui lugent*: Blessed are

they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. One naturally seeks the point in which these words fit specially the present Circle; but they seem to apply to every Circle, and to every sinner who through sorrow is trying to get rid of his sins. Possibly they are an allusion to the slothful ones who shout the examples weeping (*piangendo*, XVIII. 99), and whose purgatorial tears are the blessing which chastens. Yet tears we shall also find in other Circles. (See just below.)

Such are the three phases of reception into the Divine Order, to all of which not nine full lines are given. Very brief indeed; but Virgil rouses Dante from his stooped and crushed attitude, and they pass through the cleft rock to the next Circle, that of Avarice and Prodigality.

III. This is the Fifth Circle (line 70), and starts not far from the middle of the Canto. People are in it "weeping, lying upon the earth, with their faces turned downwards" to the dirt. Thus the avaricious are getting their own to the full — filthy lucre. They recognize the penalty in their deep sighs: *Adhæsit pavimento anima mea* — My soul cleaveth to the dust (Ps. CXIX. 25). Dirt-eating they were in life; still in Purgatory they cannot get rid of their appetite except by fierce self-discipline. But they are trying hard, and they will surely conquer themselves. Note that weeping is not confined to the sinners

of the Fourth Circle, notwithstanding the previous Beatitude (*Qui lugent*).

At this point the ethical systems of the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* come together, and will continue the same through the last three Circles (see p. 64). Yet the symbolism in each is quite different. In the *Inferno* the avaricious and the prodigal perform the celebrated "contra-dance," rolling heavy weights against each other; here their punishment is like that of the Gluttons in Hell, who lie on the ground, making "a nasty mixture" of earth and soul, and resembling in this the dirt-eating monster Cerberus, infernal type of Gluttony.

#### AVARICE AND PRODIGALITY.

Avarice is the greed for external possessions, terrestrial goods, things of this earth to which "the soul adheres," and thus it gets ingrown with matter. Here again we observe the three phases of the sin. The "first love" of property is not bad, is indeed a duty. Man must take possession of things, and transform them; his call is to put his will into that which is without will; thus he realizes himself in the world, and shows his spiritual supremacy. Yet here too the limit comes in; he must not lose himself in external possessions, else he injures or destroys individuality, which is his own highest possession,



in fact, is just that which makes all other possession possible. Note the three stages of the process.

1. That pursuit of property which realizes the individual and makes him independent in the world; this is the true assertion of selfhood against the mere thing, showing the worth of the man.— Right.

2. The individual loses himself in getting, and thus subjects selfhood to possession of the thing, when the latter is no longer necessary for his independence. The assertion of property now assails the free individuality.— Sin.

3. At this point the individual is seen to be self-undoing through Avarice; the man gets to be worthless in comparison to the thing which he acquires. Property also destroys itself in destroying that which makes property, namely individuality.

Thus Avarice shows the three stages already noticed: positive, negative, self-negative. Still further, a person may, in his pursuit of property, assail or destroy his neighbor; but his neighbor is also a self, or, universally considered, is himself. And yet further, a person may, in his pursuit of property, jeopardize society — which act is also self-negative at bottom, for if there be no society, or if it be uncertain, property cannot be worth much, having no security.

In like manner, Prodigality, the counterpart

of Avarice, has the three stages — positive, negative, self-negative. (1) The individual asserts himself in spending property, it is his, and he is free in it: thus he gives validity to his person against the thing. If property were fixed, inalienable, he would be fixed and unfree in the same. (2) But when spending squanders property, it squanders the individuality realized in the same. Thus the man destroys his world of freedom and his freedom in the world. (3) The individual, consequently, is self-destructive in prodigality; he spends himself, and then he must stop. Hence it comes that the prodigal, having spent all his substance, often ends with suicide, his last act of prodigality, and probably his most sensible one.

So much for these two vices, or rather, as Dante looks at the matter, two sides of one vice.

Taking up the thread of the poem, we first note that the subjective side of the purgatorial process, which is now in order of exposition, is represented by one example, a Pope, Adrian V. He speaks in his own name and accounts for himself, uttering no ideal instances, either hortatory or deterrent. He is prostrate on the earth, and declares emphatically that this is the penalty of Avarice. "Just as our eye did not raise itself above, being fixed on earthly things, so justice has here sunk it to the earth." He can not look up to Heaven, but must look down at dirt. But

this is not the whole penalty: "As Avarice extinguished our love for every kind of good, so Justice holds us bound hand and foot," prisoners they were, in the prison of their deeds and disposition.

Contrition, sorrow, confession, repentance, are all manifested here in the highest dignitary of the Church, expiating Avarice, the great ecclesiastical sin, according to Dante. This stern Justice is remedial, saving, truly an example for all men, who in the purgatorial state are equal, being amenable to the same law. Dante had kneeled down in reverence for the high office. "Rise up, brother," cried the Pope, "err not, I am thy fellow-servant unto one Power." Surely this Pope is going to get out: "Now go," he says to Dante, "I do not wish that thou stay long, for thy stay disturbs my weeping, with which I ripen."

Such is the one example, expiatory, real, in the form of an actual experience. It is also the first given in this Circle, in which fact we note a variation from the order of the previous Circles, which have first given the ideal, paradisaical example, instead of the real purgatorial one. In the realm of Avarice, Dante without delay strikes at the supreme instance, the head of the Church, in spite of his scheme.

*Canto Twentieth.* In the last Canto we had an example of Avarice in the Church, which example

is taken first and is purgatorial at the start, as if the poet could not wait to follow out his regular order. But in the present Canto that order will be resumed, we shall again have in due succession the three sets of examples—hortatory, expiatory, deterrent. Moreover the theme will be Avarice in the secular world, of which France is taken as the representative, France of the poet's age mainly, though the speaker be the somewhat remote founder of the reigning French dynasty.

This speaking soul in purgation, Hugh Capet, now gives the examples, repeats them, and seeks the purifying influence thereof. The manner of imparting the examples to others is changed; in the previous Circle (Sloth), they were uttered by the two spirits in front and the two in the rear; at present one man declares all three kinds of examples, the two ideal and the one real, which last is himself. This way is still more direct and personal than that of the previous Circle, one person now gives the entire subjective process in its three phases, and manifests it in himself while declaring it. Pope Adrian in the last Canto, was also a purgatorial example, like Hugh Capet, but he gave no ideal examples, only himself.

1. The hortatory examples are, as usual, both Christian and Heathen. The first is Mary, whose poverty is celebrated: "So poor wast thou" that thy new-born child was laid in a manger. Then comes the Roman, Fabricius, preferring "pov-

erty with virtue to riches with vice." Both are repeated by that spirit in anguish, seeking to assimilate itself to these examples.

The two mighty institutions, Church and Empire, were not founded by wealth, their heroic characters were poor. The greatest person ever born had the humblest origin, compassing the whole scale of humanity up to divinity. The curse of riches is that it ruins the children who inherit it, and destroys their capacity for great deeds. The Church in its consecrated orders has sought to return to poverty by a kind of violence. For poverty, if not too pinching, begets disinterestedness; it frees the individual of individualism, it has a tendency to universalize the man, if its purgatorial fruit be plucked at the ripening. Yet poverty can also beget hate, pessimism, crime; the virtue has also its limit, at which it turns to its opposite.

The third example here cited is St. Nicholas, who gave his money to save maidens from shame, really purchased them from the consequences of poverty. This Saint, therefore, stands as an instance of liberality as opposed to the mere love of money; he purchases an infinite with a finite, and that too not for himself but for others. So much for the hortatory examples.

2. Now comes the expiatory example, which is himself, yet speaking for his posterity, the kings of France, whom he embodies as it were

in a single person: "I was the root of that ill plant which overshadows all Christendom." Hugh Capet was, according to Dante, the son of a butcher, though the historic accuracy of the statement has been questioned. But it is true that "from me are sprung the Philips and Louises, by whom France has been recently ruled." Avarice is the charge against this royal house, here voiced by its ancestor, who "promoted the head of my son to the widowed crown," though he was never king himself in name. The poet gives a little history of this house's "rapine with lying and violence," by which it obtained its vast possessions, whereof we shall give no account here.

But the great deed of French avarice, in Dante's eyes, was the invasion of Italy by Charles of Anjou, whereby the Empire was cast down through the defeat and death of Manfred (in the battle of Benevento, 1265) and later by the execution of Conradin (after the battle of Tagliacozzo, 1268). Charles also "pushed Thomas back to Heaven," this Thomas being the Angelic Doctor Aquinas, Dante's theological guide, who is supposed (probably without truth) to have been poisoned at the instigation of the Frenchman. Then "another Charles" comes from France, Charles of Valois, "without arms, having only the lance with which Judas jousted," with which, however, "he

makes the paunch of Florence burst " in the year 1301, and drives Dante out of his native city into exile, and thus is one cause of the writing of this *Divine Comedy*. Another scion of the French house sold his daughter to an Italian tyrant of evil name. But chiefly the treatment of Pope Boniface VIII. by the French, by whom "Christ was made captive in his Vicar" and crucified anew, meets condemnation, though Boniface was disliked by the poet. How delighted Dante will be to "see the vengeance of the Lord" fall upon that wicked house! Yet this wish for vengeance is put into the mouth of Hugh Capet, and is uttered concerning his own descendants. Further into these historical matters it is not our purpose to go; the present Canto touches on many sides the political characters and movements of the time, but this writ of ours is not its commentary.

3. Very emphatically the spirit marks the transition to the deterrent examples. By day the souls here are to dwell on the hortatory examples, those which incite to the good, such as was Mary, "that one spouse of the Holy Spirit," who is cited (line 19) for the virtue opposed to Avarice. "But when night comes," the dark time of nature and of the soul, "in place thereof we take the contrary sound;" we call up the infernal examples, those which deter by punishment, the terror of them being re-inforced by

the darkness. Thus day and night are in sympathy with the two sets of examples, and the environment of nature enters into the discipline of the sinner. Already in Pre-purgatory night was noticed as the time of temptation, of the power of Satan, against whom a watchful fear must be instilled into the soul.

Of these deterrent examples seven are given, of which four are Greco-Roman, two are taken from the Old Testament, one from the New. All suggest the dire penalty of Avarice, which penalty is not necessarily death, but can be the evil name and the curse of the wicked disposition. It is rendered highly probable by Scartazzini (*Com. ad. loc.*) that the number seven is not accidental here, but is derived from the "seven daughters of Avarice," as characterized by Aquinas (*S. Th. II. Qu. 118, Art. 8*); that is, these daughters are vices sprung of Avarice, and represented by the seven persons here mentioned. Recollect, that these examples are repeated in the night, the time for horrible blood-curdling tales of crime; thus the fear of the Devil is carried over into sleep, nay, into dreams.

The poet would have us also note that not one alone but all are engaged in rehearsing these examples of both kinds, though only a single voice be heard at a time. The example is now conned as a lesson by these spirits in discipline, each pair of lips has to utter them by day and by night.



So far Hugh Capet, whom the poet transforms into a mouth-pièce for the reproof of France, and of her interference in Italy. Suddenly the Mountain trembled, this Mountain of Purgatory, here compared to the island of Delos, which shook "itself not so strongly \* \* \* at the parturition of the two eyes of Heaven" (Apollo and Diana, Sun and Moon). Then, too, the song is heard *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, hymn sung at the nativity of the Saviour by the angels (Luke II. 14), in which passage we have a repetition of the angelic and musical part of the purgatorial process, hinting the new birth of the soul, its rise out of finitude and the greeting of it by representatives of the Divine Order, who here sing their praise to God himself. Note again the Heathen and Christian parallels, ever present in some form to the mind of Dante — the shaking of Delos and of Purgatory, and, above all, the two divine births, one in Hellas and the other in Judea. But the question remains: What caused this Mountain to shake, being beyond the region of all physical convulsions?

*Canto Twenty-First.* The obvious literary trait of this Canto is its dramatic structure and spirit. It is a little play with a plot and a recognition at the end. Two ancient Roman poets who did not know each other in life, not being contemporaries, are brought together in the future state, along with the living poet Dante;

they are to tell their purgatorial condition, become acquainted, and pass on to Terrestrial Paradise, a group of three instead of two. The previous poetic method was getting a little formal and monotonous; the present Canto starts a new thread through the garment. Variety thus is added, but to Dante's mind deeper thoughts were doubtless present. The whole shows in a striking manner his tremendous struggle to rescue the good Heathen, whom he has put down below into the Inferno, in accord with the prevailing theology, yet under strong protest. He fables the conversion of Statius to Christianity, the chronology in the present case permitting. Thus he saves a favorite pagan and at the same time his own orthodoxy. All of which indicates the conflict in Dante's own soul with the theological limitations of his own time.

We shall divide the Canto into two portions: one introduces Statius telling the reason of the earthquake just felt, the other is the mutual recognition of the two old Roman poets.

I. Very thirsty is Dante for some information concerning the strange things just experienced, which, it is apparent, Virgil cannot explain. Suddenly a soul appears to them, as "Christ appeared to the two on the way from his sepulchral hole," and salutes them: "God give you peace"—peace which is the grand attainment of the human spirit above in Paradise. In response

to a question, Virgil repeats his mission, which is to show this living man Dante "as far as my school will lead him." My school, my philosophy, or my poetry; it has led him to the present point of Purgatory, and again we note that Heathen culture has its place in the Christian work of salvation.

But the main question is: Wherefore such shudders of the Mountain? and wherefore such an outburst (cf song) thereafter? The new soul sets about the answer.

The Mountain quakes, but this quaking springs from the will of the man purified. As soon as he has transcended his inner limit of Sin, and rises up, the whole Mountain follows, as it were, rolling and trembling in accord, trying to burst the bounds of Nature. It has no rains, no storms, no snows, no winds, no physical convulsions of its own; the earthquake here has a spiritual cause. Such is Purgatory, resting upon and determined by Free-Will.

Accordingly, there has to be at this point a little dissertation again on Free-Will, in meaning the same as we have already had. The first Will is always good (line 64); the second, with an inadequate content (passion, appetite, individualism in some form) is bad, at which stage the punitive process begins, which process in Purgatory is the self-undoing of evil; then the third Will again is good, since it wills its own punishment,

in order to get rid of its finitude and sin. We should note the first and third phases of Will are both good, yet both are distinct phases of the one complete process of the Will under purgation.

Thomas Aquinas in a well-known passage (*S. Th.* III. Sup. App. Qu. 2 A. 3. See *Scart. Phila. Butler etc. ad. loc.*) distinguishes between two kinds of voluntary acts: that which is voluntary by absolute Will (*volute absoluta*) and that which is voluntary by conditioned (finite) Will (*volute conditionata*). These two distinctions hold good as far as they go, but the third distinction must also be made to complete the purgatorial process. In fact Thomas implies this threefold movement in the passage above alluded to, as a close examination will prove. Dante, the follower of Aquinas in theology, but in poetry the follower of himself, does not fail to show the three stages of Will in his concrete picture of the purgatorial process, though his abstract statements of the same thing are by no means so clear.

The general meaning, however, is manifest. The soul wills to ascend when it has been purified by discipline, not before. So long as it has not satisfied justice, it wills its own penalty, and prefers to be punished in order to get pure. Or, Freedom is the supreme content of Free-Will, but in order to become free, it wills to be conditioned, confined, tortured, and thus to rid itself

of the limits of sin by voluntarily undergoing the punishment thereof.

As an illustration of this doctrine uttered by Statius, who has had time to reflect upon it deeply, having been in Purgatory for more than twelve hundred years, he gives his own case: "Just now I felt a free Will for a better sphere." Hence the earthquake, hence the song of praise "by the spirits on the Mountain," which is thus determined by the Free-Will of one purified man. Nature has here no bounds against the soul. Only one cause is operative on the Mountain, not a physical but a spiritual cause, being the cause "of that which Heaven from itself receives back into itself," wherein is indicated the complete cycle of the spirit separated from and returning to God, through the process of its own Free-Will.

It is to be observed that Dante regards the soul as *returning* to God, from whom it originally came (see *Conv.* IV. 28): "That it (the soul) *returns* to God (*ritorna a Dio*) as to that port from which it set out when it entered into the sea of this life."

II. After such a complete explanation from this courteous spirit, very naturally other questions arose: Who art thou? Why hast thou lain here so many ages? The first of these questions is now to be answered in lively dialogue which brings to an end the Canto.

It is the poet Statius who lived in the last half of the first century after Christ. He tells the names of his poems: "I sang of Thebes and of the great Achilles." A Roman imitator of the Greek epos, regarded in these days as rhetorical, affected, turgid, he finds little admiration. But to Dante he seemed a great poet, next indeed to Virgil, and so must be gratefully interwoven into the Divine Song of the Future State.

Statius goes on to tell the source of his inspiration: the *Æneid*, wherein he is like Dante. But what different things the two men have gotten out of that poem! Still he touches the common chord and Dante smiles, in spite of Virgil's frown. Whereat Statius asks: Why that flash of laughter? Then the point comes out: This is Virgil before thee. Statius "was already bowing down to embrace my Teacher's feet," when Virgil prevents, saying, "Thou art a shade and beholdest a shade."

Very subtle and dramatic is this little bit of verse, Italian, too, in its finest details. What a play of the features, of the eyes, and of gesticulation! The whole body speaks, being made to give its living commentary to the spoken word. The tone becomes sportive without a trace of Dante's vitriol; he shows his heart toward his two poetic friends, though they may be shades.

Here we must note one of those correspond-

ences or homologies which are found everywhere in the structure of the *Divine Comedy*. In the latter half of Pre-purgatory (*Cantos VI. to IX.*) Sordello an Italian poet, is introduced into the company of Dante and Virgil in a way very similar to the way in which Statius, a Roman poet, is introduced to them here in the latter half of Mid-purgatory. There is the same unfolding of a little dramatic plot ending in mutual recognition, the same praise of Virgil, the same explanation of their respective conditions in Hell and Purgatory. Then there is the same going together of the three poets through several localities or Circles, and the witnessing of the souls there, along with much intervening conversation. Finally the limit of the journeys of the two correspond. Sordello goes with Dante to and through the pre-purgatorial Paradise; Statius goes with Dante to and through the post-purgatorial Paradise. Yet both are mysteriously dropped at the entrance to the higher sphere. Sordello does not go with Dante into Mid-purgatory, Statius does not go with Dante into the celestial Paradise. Yet there is one small point of difference, to account for which let the reader exercise his subtlety. Virgil and Sordello embrace without any obstruction (*VI. 75*) both being shades; Virgil and Statius do not embrace, the reason given is that both are shades.

*Canto Twenty-Second.* This Canto falls of itself into three different portions.

I. The first portion, though short, suggests various questions about the structure of Mid-purgatory. What we have called the objective side of the purgatorial process — the Angel, the Song (here the spoken word), and the Beatitude — are now given in six lines briefly, confusedly and retrospectively. Mark the opening, “the Angel was already left behind us;” the three poets had entered the Sixth Circle, without noting the fact at the time, and now it is parenthetically interjected between two portions of the conversation with Statius. Still the talk on the same subject continues; the theme is Avarice and Prodigality, though the Fifth Circle has been left behind.

Much entangled are the three lines which give the Beatitude, which lines we shall translate, since most of the modern texts and translations are wrong in our judgment. “And those (the chorus of souls or possibly of Angels) who have their desire in Justice (*justitiam* in the Vulgate) had proclaimed us (*Detto n'avean*) *Blessed (beati)*, and their voices furnished this (word *Blessed, beati*) with *thirst (sitiunt or sitio)* without other (words of this Beatitude).” The allusion is to the Latin text: *Beati qui esuriunt et sitiunt justitiam*; the chorus simply took the words *Beati qui sitiunt*, and left the other words which



will be employed in the Sixth Circle to express its Beatitude.

Into this jumble questions of text also enter, which it is the purpose of the present book to avoid as far as possible. The main thing which the student seeks to trace here is the symmetrical structure, which he finds, though it be all contorted and out of place. There is the appearance of the Angel with the erasure of the P, there is the reception of the sinner, here by a chorus with song probably, there is the utterance of the Beatitude, in the chant probably. To be sure all mention of the musical accompaniment is omitted in this very brief and imperfect statement of the objective side of the purgatorial process, but it seems necessary for the sake of symmetry with corresponding portions in other Circles.

Did the poet have any object in making these changes? It is quite possible that he was beginning to feel that his formula was getting to be too formal, too much like a machine. We think we can trace some such feeling in these later Cantos of Mid-purgatory. But the present change is surely for the worse; bad workmanship it is, very bad; desperate must be the admiration which does not stamp its foot at this passage; and cry out in purgatorial torture, "I can no more."

II. But now the stream of poetry begins

running once again, the little drama between Virgil and Statius opens afresh, with new motives. Virgil reciprocates the strong affection which had been shown by Statius in the preceding Canto, and then drives the main question home: "How could avarice find a place within thy breast?" The answer sets forth that it was the opposite vice which had clutched Statius, namely, Prodigality, which is also punished in the Fifth Circle.

Now comes a poetic dissertation by Statius on Virgil's poetry, wherein purification is the great fact prominently brought out. In the first place Statius declares that it was a passage of the *Æneid* which set him to thinking about his sin of Prodigality, "and thus I repented of this as of other sins." Moral purgation, then, is the great poetical effect here designated; not the beautiful imagery, not the musical versification, not the Virgilian cadence, not any æsthetic quality, but the ethical one is the fundamental thing. It is true that there is a fierce dispute about the special meaning of the line here cited in Dante's text from the *Æneid* (*Quid non mortalia pectora cogis, Auri sacra fames?*); but the general purport is perfectly clear; it was the means of purifying Statius of his Prodigality.

In the second place, we observe even a greater result; through a passage of one of Virgil's Eclogues, Statius is led to Christianity. This is

doubtless Dante's own fiction, as there is no historical evidence of the conversion of Statius. But all through the Middle Ages, Virgil's Fourth Eclogue was regarded as a prophecy of the coming of Christ — Emperors, Popes, Fathers have interpreted it and cited it as such. Of this belief which became engrafted upon medieval legend, Dante makes his own use in the case of Statius, who, however, remained "through fear" a so-called crypto-Christian (*chiuso cristiano*), for which lukewarmth he paid the purgatorial penalty below in the Circle of Sloth.

Such is the real worth of Virgil or any great poet. To read him in truth is a catharsis, not specially a pleasure; he is to transform his reader, not simply entertain him. We may all believe still that Virgil had a premonition of the new order approaching; the poet of an age must have some such deep anticipation of the future which he seeks to utter. Dante felt strongly this characteristic of the old Roman bard, and here celebrates it in particular, showing that the Heathen seer can lead a soul beyond himself into Christendom. Far-reaching is Dante's definition of the poet "as the one who goes in the night carrying a light behind him, and helps not himself, but makes the persons wise who come after him," (lines 67-69.) Thus the greatest world-poets, those who belong to all ages and all peoples, can have, indeed, must have, in certain ways a

new meaning for every new age and new people. Such a world-poet is Dante, and the history of his interpretation for six centuries is the proof. Time deepens but never gets deeper than Time's seer.

In such manner Statius declares that Virgil's poetry inducted him into morals and religion. Something of Dante himself we must read in this memorable little treatise on poetics, very serviceable still to-day. Now the talk is wound up by a short account of other Latin and Greek poets, who are with some of their own characters below in Limbo. Note that these characters are all female, possibly to assign to the poets the high company of their own ideal woman. Dante tells also his part, he listened to the talk of Virgil and Statius, "who gave me intelligence to poetize (*intelletto a poetar*).” These, then, are Dante's masters.

But he knows that Homer is first of poets: "that Greek whom the Muses nourished with their milk more than any other man." In the *Inferno* (Canto IV.) "that Greek" was called the "sovereign poet." Dante is aware of the fact that his two masters here, Virgil and Statius, are, to a greater or less extent, imitators of Homer, following on the lines which "that Greek" laid down. He feels, therefore, the grand literary succession, which connects him with his mighty elder brother, whose colossal form dominated all

Greek and Roman literature. Yet he may never have read a line of Homer, in the original or translated.

III. The poets have been for some time in the Sixth Circle, that of the Gluttons, when a tree appears "in the middle of the way with apples sweet to smell and good." The shape is significant: "as a fir grades itself from branch to branch upwards, so this downwards," whereof the plain purpose is that "nobody may climb it" for the fruit and fluid, of which the latter in the form of "a clear liquor fell from the lofty rock and spread itself over the leaves." Here eating and drinking are suggested, and this must be the Tree of Life, of physical Life, not the paradisaical Tree of that name, but derived from it, at least as a symbol. The prohibition which is distinctly uttered by its shape, it utters also with a voice: "Of this food ye shall have want." Surely the penalty for eating and drinking too much; the counterstroke to Gluttony is given by abstinence.

Many curious fancies have sprung from this Tree; some commentators have conceived it to be upside down with roots growing in the air and branches in the soil; thus too it has been sometimes pictured in illustrations. And that stream of water trickling through the leaves has been supposed to fall upwards, counter to gravitation. There is no necessity for these marvelous appearances in Dante's text; still, we may take some

satisfaction in the thought that if we must have a miracle, let us have it complete, and not stop half way. Here it is, then, root and branch.

Under any circumstances, however, this remains a remarkable Tree, with its biggest limbs at the top — which fact, held to literal fidelity, is also hard to find in nature. But it is clearly a symbolic Tree, used to express spirit, and hence changed and adapted to its purpose. Hear it now speak from its branches, for this voice is not the voice of some unseen angel — angels have a different function — but the voice of the Tree, declaring the hortatory examples to the sinners of the present Circle.

Among these examples we note the Christian, the Heathen and the Hebrew, two cases of men, two of women, and one of an age, the golden — all of which show forth the glories of temperance, the virtue opposite to Gluttony. Yet these examples differ among themselves and manifest a certain gradation; the Heathen women here cited have simply the virtue of abstinence, Mary has the same, coupled with charity, here showing itself as the provident care of a woman of the household for the well-being of others; Daniel and John the Baptist have the same, whereby they attain unto wisdom and glory; the age of gold has the same, which thus becomes the virtue, not of an individual merely, but of a whole epoch.

Thus the Tree, possessed of food and drink, is endowed with a voice and preaches its sermon against excessive indulgence in its own products. Vegetable nature now is gifted with utterance; hitherto in the Purgatory this utterance has been only of men. The previous sins have been more of the spirit, more human; but food and drink now cry out against their own abuse, here with examples inciting to the good, later with examples deterrent of the evil.

### GLUTTONY.

The sixth sin has the same general characteristics as the other sins. We can trace in Gluttony the threefold movement which has been already so often designated, but which must be again briefly repeated.

1. Man must assert his right of physical existence by supplying the body's needs, which is a right of individuality in one of its phases. This is the good side of eating and drinking.

2. But when eating and drinking become the chief end in life, and man subjects his reason to his appetite, selfishness and sin enter, the right of individuality turns to the wrong of individualism — Gluttony.

3. Herein we see that man as a rational being has undone himself, there is no use for him except to fill up and digest. Gluttony thus is

self-negative, nugatory, absurd, the glutton becomes a comic person, self-annulling, ridiculous, even grotesque, and so he is portrayed in the literature as well as the pictorial art of the world.

In like manner temperance, the opposite of Gluttony, passes through the same phases, for there can be a good temperance and a bad temperance. The virtue so called has in it the same movement as the vice so called. Temperance may turn to an abstinence which destroys the individual, and thus becomes really self-destroying, being then a most intemperate temperance. Eating and drinking may well be deemed a physical means to a spiritual end; if on the one hand you destroy the means, you destroy the end; if on the other hand you make the means the end, you pervert both end and means. The world has sometimes experienced as much injury from the excess of a virtue as from the excess of a vice. That which is always true is the total concrete process, the image of reason itself in its complete universality, of which all abstractions of all kinds are but transitory phases.

*Canto Twenty-Third.* We have just had in the last part of the previous Canto the hortatory examples, which are paradisaical and ideal, now come the actual examples of Purgatory — people with whom the poet speaks as in real life. Two



main portions we find in the present Canto: the general purgatorial penalty for Gluttony and the special case of Forese Donati, Dante's friend and relative.

I. Weeping and singing are heard together — joy and pain; the words are *Labia mea, Domine — my lips, O Lord!* A strange use of a fragment of a verse of Scripture (Psalm LI. 15); why does the penitential Glutton say just that? He evidently points to the seat of struggle; his lips long for food and drink, yet also desire to praise the Lord. Thus in a symbolic way the conflict is indicated in the two uses of the lips, physical and spiritual. Still it is a peculiar passage, with a touch of travesty on a biblical phrase, probably not intended; who cannot detect in *My lips, O Lord*, a smack of the grotesque?

The purgatorial appearance of the Gluttons is given with a decided relish of humor. Instead of the fat, sleek, rotund shape, we behold a hollow-eyed, pale-faced skeleton of a ghost, whose "skin took its form from the bones." The eye-holes appeared eyeless, "rings without gems," and, following a strange medieval fancy, one could easily read the letters *Omo* (Homo, man) in the two round sockets with the nose-bones in between. Thus the gruesome humor of the poet paints those hungry and thirsty souls, who did nought but satisfy their hunger and thirst on earth; they have still the intense

appetite, but no power of gratification. In the true purgatorial spirit they accept with joy the penalty of their sin; indeed one of them says that this suffering ought not to be called a punishment but a solace, or relief from punishment. *Io dico pena e dovria dir sollazzo.*

It is worth the trouble to compare the poet's treatment of Gluttons in the Inferno with that in Purgatory. There we meet at the entrance the monster dog Cerberus, which has here vanished, man having willed to put down the animal; there the spirits lie in the mud, forming "a filthy mixture" of soil and soul, upon which the two travelers tread, while here the man is upright, struggling in hope though emaciated to the last degree, as all the good eating and drinking is in the process of being bleached out of him, that he may be pure once more. Thus the infernal and purgatorial appearances of Gluttony are, for a sound reason, quite different though the sin be the same.

II. We are now to behold the example here in the person of Forese Donati, a Florentine Glutton, of whom our poet speaks in the most familiar and friendly manner. Dante's wife belonged to the Donati family, that mysterious Gemma, into whose domestic life so many lady admirers of the poet would like to take a peep — and some men have tried to steal a glance. (See Witte's elaborate essay in his *Dante-Forschungen*.)

Forese explains quite fully his condition which is purgatorial. "The odor which comes from the apple and the spray" is what "kindles in us the desire of eating and drinking," which is their torture, their crucifixion, yet also is their wish, wherein Forese compares the purgatorial suffering to that of Christ on the cross, who likewise willed the penalty "when he freed us with His blood." Thus the Christian religion in its supreme example is a purgatorial religion.

One must not, moreover, run from his besetting sin, he is not allowed to run from it in Purgatory. He must meet it face to face, and desperately fight it, till he triumphs over it and becomes master. "The odor of the apple and the spray," is the grand temptation coming to these lovers of eating and drinking, that they conquer their inner weakness, transcend their spirit's limitation, then the odor will not affect them. To run away, from temptation may be necessary at times, but it is a difficulty deferred, since one has to take himself along in his flight.

Dante uses the opportunity here to pay a mighty compliment to his kinswoman Nella (Giovanella) Donati, wife of Forese, who in a few years has prayed her gluttonous husband through nearly entire Purgatory: "With her devout prayers and sighs she has drawn me from the coast where one waits (Pre-purgatory), and has liberated me from the other Circles" of Mid-

purgatory, till now he lacks only one of getting out. Truly a model wife; she has remained "a little widow," for quite twenty years (we may conjecture from the supposed date of present passage) shrouded in dark weeds, praying for that wicked husband of hers. We should note here that one of the chief traits of Dante's ideal woman is to pray her bad relatives out of Purgatory. And, laboring under the curse of curiosity, we have to wonder if Dante had not in mind his own wife, Gemma Donati, by necessity of contrast, while writing this eulogy of Nella Donati.

But it is certain that he did have some other women in mind, namely, those "brazen-faced Florentine ladies," who go about "showing the breast with the paps." For which follies of dress and manners he throws upon his fair countrywomen some of his Dantesque vitriol, and puts into the mouth of Forese an ominous prophecy concerning them and their city. Thus into the sweet, loving praise of Nella is injected a bitter spirit of sarcasm. Still there is a familiar, yes, domestic tone in the present Canto which gives to it a special charm.

*Canto Twenty-Fourth.* The Sixth Circle is brought now to an end. The expiatory portion of it is continued from the last Canto; then the deterrent portion speaks its examples from the apple tree, after which the objective side of the

purgatorial process of Gluttony is rapidly given. These three heads we shall consider separately.

I. The conversation with Forese goes on; another woman of the Donati family Dante inquires after, it is Piccarda, whom we shall meet hereafter in the Paradiso, where her story will be told by the poet with a strong and beautiful sympathy. These Donati women seem to have made a great impression upon Dante; two of them he has portrayed in exquisite touches, rescuing their fair souls from the world's oblivion. Here we cannot help secretly asking again: How about thy wife Gemma, who was also a Donati? Silence does seem to have a voice in her case; but what does it say? Nobody has yet been able to decipher the oracle, dumb, yet just therein darkly suggesting its story.

And here yet another woman enters who has roused a prodigious curiosity and questioning among readers and commentators. "He was muttering, and I think I heard him say *Gentucca*." Who is Gentucca? "A woman is born and wears not yet the wimple (not yet married) who will make my city delight thee, however much men may blame *it*" (or *her*, since *la* in the original may refer to the city or to the woman). So says a citizen of Lucca, called Bonagiunta, to Dante, giving to the latter a secret thrust, if we can catch his innuendo aright, and chaffing him about some love affair, the

matter being half spoken and half gesticulated. Whereat gossip breaks loose: What sort of a woman was this Getucca? What relation did she sustain to Dante? Why does he mention such things anyhow? Some expounders have thought that Gentucca was not even the name of a woman but of a class, the populace (derived from *gente*). But it is probable that Dante, poet that he was and susceptible always to feminine charm, formed a tie of some degree of tenderness with a lady of Lucca during his stay in that city, and the fact became known, so that Bonagiunta, also a lover as well as a glutton, gave him a little furtive dig here upon the subject, along this purgatorial road.

Bonagiunta now passes easily from love to poems on love, for he is a poet too, author of amatory sonnets, and he recognizes in Dante the writer of "the new rhymes commencing: *Ladies, ye who have intelligence of Love.*" The talk at once becomes literary and we see that Dante is aware of his position in the world of letters. He has introduced the "new style" which he claims to be the natural one in contrast to the artificial manner of other poets of the time, some of whom are here mentioned. The description of his poetic procedure he gives: "When Love inspires, I make a note of it, and thus I go setting down what he (Love) dictates within." Somehow this little discourse on amatory poetry

springs out of the mention of Gentucca, who possibly inspired some of Dante's verses known to Bonagiunta though the latter cites the first Canzone of the *Vita Nuova*, the beginning of which is the above line. At the same time our poet gives the literary position of his early work, evidently with some satisfaction; nor does he forget to state its characteristic, the style, the new and natural style, epoch-making in Italian literature. We cannot help adding, however, that Dante in spite of his boast has also a touch of artificiality at times, which is especially felt in his structure; inspiration he possesses, and it is mighty, but he has too a mechanical side, very needful, but sometimes a little naked.

A short talk with Forese ends this portion of the Circle. Another bitter, doleful prophecy concerning the future of Florence, "daily divesting itself more and more of good;" what love for his native city, what hate! Still another prophecy, now spoken by Forese, concerning his brother Corso Donati; seemingly the most restless of all those restless Florentines, whose dragging to death is typical of the city's condition — wherewith let prophecy rest for a while.

II. In turning around the Mountain Dante comes in sight of "another apple tree," corresponding to the first one at the entrance of the Circle, yet evidently somewhat different. Peo-

ple under it raised their hands and besought the leaves, but did not get what they prayed for; the tree made "their wish more acute, " but refused to gratify the same. "Whereat they departed as if undeceived," and to our three poets approaching, hark! the tree speaks: "Pass on." Manifestly it prohibits while enticing, as did the first tree also. Wherein we may note the common fundamental fact in the penititory discipline of these Gluttons.

But this tree is declared to be an offshoot of the tree whose fruit was eaten of by Eve — the tree of knowledge; the first act of disobedience came, therefore, from the temptation of eating what was forbidden, hence it is ranked here as an act of intemperance. The primitive story of Paradise has been transformed by the poet from a story of sudden temptation and fall to a story of continuous temptation and prohibition; the tree still tempts but withholds and even forbids. This change may be ascribed to the influence of the legend of Tantalus eternally hungry and thirsty, but never able to reach the fruit and the water. Thus Dante, as usual, weaves Hebrew and Classic fable together in the new story of man.

The tree now speaks further, and gives the deterrent examples; one of which is Classic, that of the Centaurs in their fight with Theseus; one is Hebrew, whose suitableness is not very



striking, as the act of intemperance seems to turn upon the difference between lapping water like a dog and drinking water like a man — water, not wine. But the supreme Hebrew example is Eve, source of the world's ill, in contrast to Mary, source of the world's healing, who was cited as the first hortatory example.

The two trees of this Circle are apple trees, and both speak prohibitions, both tempt yet forbid the Gluttons, such being their purgatorial penalty. Still the two trees are of different varieties — one is the tree of life, the other is the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The first speaks the instances which incite to virtue, perhaps because the love of life, like every instinctive love, is innocent; the second tree speaks the instances which deter from the bad, inasmuch sin enters with the knowledge of good and evil and makes necessary an Inferno of punishment. Note that Eve is said to have eaten of the parent tree of this second one, hence she knew evil, and so becomes a deterrent example.

III. The subjective side of the purgatorial process for Gluttony is now ended with its three sets of examples, hortatory, expiatory, deterrent. Next we pass to the objective side which is dismissed in a few lines, not retrospectively and confusedly as in the previous Circle (XXII. 1-6), yet briefly and not very clearly.

1. The Angel appears, dazzling the mortal

eyes of Dante with intense light, which is now red, though white has been the angelic color hitherto. The redness may apply only to the hot metal with which the Angel is compared; or it may suggest the passion of the next Circle, which, however, seems alien to the angelic nature. At any rate the Angel performs his usual function of pointing out the passage of the next Circle, and of erasing the P from Dante's forehead.

2. No music is mentioned, but simply "I heard say *Beati*," etc. Whose the voice or voices are, remains also untold. I sometimes imagine that Dante expects his reader to supply these omissions, in accord with his full explanations in previous Circles. Why should he repeat what he has already repeated several times? Thus he studies brevity, and also avoids the monotony of a mechanical repetition of the same things.

3. The Beatitude here has a different treatment from that of any other Circle, inasmuch as it is translated into Italian from the Latin and interpreted. Still the last line suggests the words: *Beati qui esuriunt justitiam*. The Beatitude as it appears in the Gospel is halved by Dante, one-half applying to Avarice and one-half to Gluttony: "Blessed are they which do hunger (Gluttony) and thirst (Avarice) after righteousness." That is, Avarice and Gluttony cease to be sins when a spiritual object, as right-

eousness, is substituted for a material object, as money or gratification of physical appetite.

*Canto Twenty-Fifth.* Again we behold the poet adjusting himself in the Cosmos: he looks up at the face of the physical universe and states where he is on the Earth in relation to the sun and stars. "The sun had left the meridian to Taurus, and the night to the Scorpion." Thus we have to bring before the imagination all Heaven and Earth in order to tell the time of day. In this manner Dante informs us that it is about two o'clock in the afternoon. What a demand upon his reader!

The present Canto has two main portions. The one gives a brief history of the soul from its beginning in the sexual process to its condition after separation from the body. The second starts the purgatorial process of Lust, the carnal sin which is to be gotten rid of in the present (seventh) Circle. It will be noted that these two portions of the Canto are connected; the sexual process has its legitimate sphere, but also its excess, which becomes a transgression of the law — Lust.

I. Dante has in his mind a question which troubles him a good deal, and which has troubled his reader through all the Inferno and through the Purgatorio up to the present: it is the relation between soul and body. These are disembodied spirits; how do they talk, weep, laugh, indeed

suffer physical pain? They had a corporeal form in which they sinned; now they are punished after it is laid aside; they still feel thirst and hunger when they have no stomach. So Dante asks of his Guide: "How can one get lean in that place where there is no need of food?" Surely there must be a second body of some sort, which is now to be explained.

Why has not the poet told us before? Very important is such knowledge for understanding the poem, as it has unfolded hitherto. Mark that it is not Virgil who gives the explanation but Statius, who is a Christian convert from Heathendom. So he, perhaps more than Virgil, who lacked conversion, can make the transition from the Pagan to the Christian philosophy of the soul. Still we must not forget that Virgil hitherto in Dante's poem has shown himself a strictly orthodox theologian of the school of Thomas Aquinas. But in this matter of the soul, its origin, permanence and destination, Virgil voluntarily hands the discussion over to Statius.

Yet Virgil, before he resigns the theme, makes two comparisons, which seem to show his inability to cope with the present subject. He, pagan and poet that he is, alludes to an old myth, that of Meleager, who was consumed when a certain fire-brand was burnt up, in accord with the decree of the Fates. Thus one can not only get lean,

but be consumed in body by some hidden cause wholly apart from the want of sustenance. A fable, not the fact, is this case of Meleager; moreover its pertinence to the state of the soul after death is very slight. Surely Virgil is unequal to the present subject; yet he tries his hand again, illustrating the incorporeal soul by an image of the body in a mirror. Yet this does not hit the point; enough, here is Statius, whose argument we shall have to study a little. We hope to make it somewhat more clear by separating it into five heads.

1. That which is here called "perfect blood," the spermatic fluid, takes in the heart "a formative virtue for all human members," becomes the ideal germinal principle of the body. United with the female principle — "the one disposed to suffer, the other to act" — it begins "to work" and to assume its first soul-form, which is "that of a plant," wherein we reach its vegetative existence.

2. From this stage it develops till it begins "to feel and to move itself like a marine fungus;" it expands into organs. Here it has attained the second stage, it has now the animal soul, which has sprung from "the virtue in the heart of its parent."

3. But how this animal is to become a being gifted with speech and intelligence is the difficult point which "has caused a wiser man than thou

art to go astray." The soul "when the articulation of the brain is perfected," is created in the animal body by the direct act of God: "the First Mover breathes new spirit" into the embryo, "an individual soul it becomes which lives and feels, *and revolves itself within itself*" (*sé in sé rigira*).

Here the great battle opens, turning upon this question of man's beginning and becoming. It may be said that since the creation of the soul there has been a running fight down the ages over the creation of the soul. How shall we condition in time that which conditions time? Or how determine in thought that which determines thought? Many opinions we hear, all expressing the intense struggle of man to grasp not simply his temporal, but his infinite nature.

Four chief ways there are of conceiving the soul's origin—two physical and two spiritual. The first is that it is transmitted in the act of generation; the second is that it is a process of evolution from the body. The third affirms the doctrine of pre-existence; the fourth asserts a direct creation by the divine fiat. The last is the doctrine of Thomas Aquinas, from whom it has passed to Dante.

Upon the last two ways the Christian Fathers divided. Origen and his followers held to the doctrine of pre-existence, which has its root far back in the Orient, but came to the Occident

mainly through Plato. The scholastics, however, headed by Aquinas, emphatically reject pre-existence. *Animæ non sunt creatæ ante corpora, sed simul creantur quum corporibus infunduntur* (Aquinas, cited by Scart. ad Purg. 61). Still more decisively is the physical origin of the soul rejected by the medieval Christian. Says Aquinas: *Hereticum est dicere quod anima intellectua traducatur cum semine*. In Dante's time the battle must have been going on still, after the death of the Church's greatest theologian; the poet also took sides and said his word, whereof the present Canto is the proof. So far life, but now comes death.

4. "When Lachesis has no more thread," the soul separates itself from the flesh, and "of itself miraculously falls to one of two shores," Acheron, or Tiber, Hell or Purgatory. "It takes along the human and divine" elements of itself; some of its powers, the sensuous, are "mute," while others, the spiritual, "memory, intelligence and will are more acute than before." But what form do they assume?

5. "As soon as place circumscribes it," the soul must show its bounds therein; "its formative virtue" reproduces a body of air, it makes for itself a second body, "an appearance, a shadow," in which each sense has its organ. Such is the phantasmal body of the future state, which we have been beholding all along; we have heard it

talk, weep, laugh, quite as if it were material. Dante has now done his duty by us; he has accounted for his ghosts.

Such is the second body created by the formative energy of the soul after the death of the first body. It is substantially the belief of all peoples in regard to departed spirits; a new ghostly body is formed which under certain conditions can be seen and heard. The North American Indian has some such faith, so had the Homeric Greek. It is a fundamental part of the great Mythos of the Apocalypse, this pre-supposition of a belief in the Future State. Dante takes it for granted till now, when he seeks to explain it in connection with the birth of the soul.

Thomas Aquinas, however, seems not to accept this second body: *Anima separata a corpore non habet aliquod corpus*. According to Philalethes he even regards the view that the soul can assume such a phantasmal shape before the resurrection as heretical. But in a passage of a different work (*Summa contra Gentiles*, IV. 79, cited by Ueberweg, *Hist. Phil.*, p. 451, *Morris' Trans.*), Thomas is reported as saying: "Since this thinking and feeling soul is at the same time the form-giving principle of the body, it forms for itself after death, by means of this very power, a new body similar to its previous one." This last is the view which Dante holds.

Another great battle of Dante's time has left



its trace in this Canto, the battle over the immortality of the soul: "This is the point which made one wiser than thou art go astray." Who is it? Some say Aristotle, but doubtless the allusion is to Averrhoes, the great Arabian philosopher, who had interpreted Aristotle as denying individual immortality, and who was refuted by Thomas Aquinas. It was Averrhoes who "held the potential intellect to be separate from the soul because he saw no organ taken by it," though Aristotle asserts something of the same kind (*De Anima*, III. 45). At any rate the doctrine of immortality was saved to Europe, and out of the new-awakened faith therein Dante's poem arose, still bearing many marks on its face of the mightiest conflict of medieval thought. There are indications in the *Convito* that Dante himself leaned at one time to Averrhoism, from which he was probably rescued by Aquinas. So we must endure these somewhat dry and obscure scholastic passages, they mean probably the poet's salvation at a doubting period of life.

II. From the foregoing dissertation, which unfolds the physical and spiritual origin of man, we pass to the vice which springs out of that origin, the vice which is the negative side of human genesis. This is Lust (often called Luxury in medieval writings), which is cleansed in the last circle of Purgatory.

## LUST.

In this sin more than any other, perhaps, we can see that "Love is the seed of every virtue in you and of every operation which merits punishment" (XVII. 105). Love which is purely the gratification of animal passion is Lust; Love which is the instinct of the perpetuation of the individual, is "without error." The procreative desire has its right, but it has also its wrong. In the sexual process we may discern the three stages which have been noticed in other cases.

1. The first form of the generative instinct asserts the infinite worth of the individual by seeking to procreate and perpetuate the same. Thus the generic act is for another, while gratifying itself; so far gratification is its right.

2. The second form of the generative instinct asserts itself against the right of another or of the family. Thus it becomes destructive, and the individual assails individuality as such, that is, assails the universal principle of itself. This is the sphere of wrong, specially of Lust.

3. The logical result is that in Lust the individual destroys himself, is really suicidal, self-negative. This is usually shown in a twofold way: physically in his own body, mentally in his degradation; often too the penalty comes through the law.

Thus the sin of Lust, like all other sins, is

self-annulling, absurd, undoing itself in its own gratification. So it must be served up to itself. The fire of passion must be burnt out by fire, which we shall find as the punitive element in the present Circle of Purgatory.

And here we note that the virtue opposite to Lust is capable of excess. If chastity means that the sexual instinct has no right, and that the sole escape from license is the nunnery or monastery, then we have landed in a logical annihilation of the race. Thus our chastity may bring us just to the point where Lust reached: the destruction of the individual.

There may have been ages in which some of the community should believe that celibacy is the only chastity, as some to-day should believe that total abstinence is the only temperance. Certain people need to be put under external restraint in morals, yet man as such is to win the battle through freedom.

But we come to the purgation, the element of which is fire, which in form of a blaze flashes outward from the wall and makes the passage very narrow along the brink between the flame and the precipice. A part of the journey requiring a watchful outlook; so we must "keep the rein tight on the eyes." The souls are put into their own element, they are to feel the fire of their Lust, which, however, is to burn itself out and leave them free.

At the same time, while they are undergoing this process, the people are singing a hymn *Summæ Deus clementiæ*, the hymn sung at matins in the Church. This song invokes the divine help,

Ut corde puro sordium  
Te perfruemur largius.  
Lumbos jecurque morbidum  
Flammis adure congruis  
Accincti ut artus excubent  
Luxu remoto pessimo.

Here is the complete suggestion of the purgatorial fire and its purpose in the true spirit of penitence. The souls sing in chorus out of the flames, music keeps them together and in harmony, the common song unites and supports. In the last four Circles we have heard no singing, at least none has been mentioned, but now it breaks forth again, in this final part of Purgatory.

The hortatory examples in this sphere are given in a few rapid strokes. The first is Mary in her response to the angel (Luke, I. 34), who thus begins and ends the hortatory examples of Mid-purgatory, with her word cited from the same passage of Scripture — she being the personality who comprehends all the virtues. The second and heathen instance celebrates Diana for driving out of her choir the impure Helice. These two instances, sacred and profane, are impartially shouted by the souls in purgation, when they return to the singing of the hymn.

Evidently they are having a desperate struggle with their passion. They must hold before themselves the great examples of virtue, and they must keep attuned by the hymn to the Divine Order, and ask for their own punishment. "Such is their diet," very significant for human discipline.

Another fact: "Then they proclaimed wives and husbands who were chaste, as virtue and matrimony imposes upon us." Here it seems that Dante regarded chastity as belonging to the family as well as to the cloister, a domestic virtue, not simply a monastic one.

*Canto Twenty-Sixth.* We are now introduced to the other works of the souls who are in the process of being purified from the carnal passion. As in the previous Canto people were going in one direction shouting the instances of chastity, so now people come in the opposite direction, and, meeting the others, they kiss and pass on. What is the meaning of the kiss? The salute with a holy kiss? or is it of the opposite kind? One thinks that here it must be of the purified sort, for the kiss, like love itself, is of two sorts. These people must transfigure the kiss, as they have transfigured love.

The two sets of people, have each a distinct cry. The new folk shouts "Sodom and Gomorrah," confessing their special kind of carnal excess to be sodomy, which vice is punished in

the Inferno (Seventh Circle, third Circle) on a plain of burning sand, upon which fall flakes of fire. The second set cries out the name of Pasiphae, who made herself a brute, according to the fable, for the gratification of her lust. Here we have the classes of sinners of this circle typified in two famous examples, one taken from sacred and the other from profane story.

Furthermore, at the request of Dante, one of the shades explains the two sets, and why each one shouts in confession of sin. This spirit is Guido Guinicelli, a poet of Dante's time, here atoning for "the vice of luxury." But the interest now becomes literary. Dante at this place points out and acknowledges with gratitude one of his masters, calling him "my father," and this one in turn utters a prophecy of the poet's fame, which "Lethe cannot make obscure." Guido then indicates a second spirit, who is also a poet, Arnould Daniel, the troubador, who gives a short salutation in the Provençal tongue.

So Dante's purgatorial examples in this Circle are two poets, both of them among the best of their time, for whom he shows strong affection and admiration. Would he hint this vice is the special danger of poets? Does he cast therein a sort of reflection upon himself, he being in the class of poets? The next Canto will tell us more.

It is to be noted that the spirits themselves here shout out both the hortatory and the deterrent examples, interspersing the same with the hymn already given. Thus both examples and song are employed by these souls in purgation.

*Canto Twenty-Seventh.* Again Dante looks up at the great clock of the Cosmos, and takes his bearings in both Space and Time. He tells where he is on the circle of the Earth's circumference, dividing the latter into its four quarters in reference to the point where he stands. Then the position of the Sun is stated, which gives the time of day. Then the relation of the Sun to the zodiac is indicated, which tells the time of year. Thus the poet reads from the Earth, Sun, and Stars his temporal and spatial point in the Universe. His individual adjustment to the grand physical totality of the Heavens must be given, and hints symbolically the same adjustment to the grander spiritual totality of the Heavens.

The present Canto has the transition out of Purgatory proper into the terrestrial Paradise. We shall designate the two main portions, each of which has two distinct steps.

I. The movement out of purgation embraces, in the first place, a part of the sphere of Lust, which is still to be gotten rid of. It is what we have called the objective side in the process of purification; the angel appears and sings one of the Beatitudes: *Beati mundo corde*, Blessed are

the pure in heart. To this last we may add what is not here expressed, but which is implied: For they shall see God. The final Circle is passed, the next promise is the vision of God, which is reached by purity of heart coming through the purgatorial discipline. Very short is this part of the process compared to the fullness of its description in the earlier Circles; the poet evidently felt the repetition.

But, in the second place, he adds something new, he gives an afterpart. The angel commands all there, including Dante, to enter the purgatorial flame, and listen to the singing from beyond. Great is the terror of Dante, he recalls human bodies which he has already seen burning—a shuddering reminiscence of the terrible punishments of the Middle Ages. Virgil exhorts, encourages, reminding him that it is a spiritual flame, and “cannot make thee bald of one hair in a thousand years.” It is to no purpose; then comes the final stroke: “Between thee and Beatrice is this wall” of fire.

Dante enters it, the last stage of purification, which, when passed through will permit him to see the terrestrial Paradise, where Beatrice will meet him. “I could have thrown myself into boiling glass to cool me,” so great was the heat. But the thought of the beyond and the singing voice “guide us.” This terrific flame is the flame of Lust, in which we note a



double process. It is their own passion which burns them, they are in their own hell-fire. But the fire burns itself up, is self-destroying, the negation of negation, the destruction of Lust. Such is the purgatorial temper, as we have witnessed it; the man wills his own punishment in order to free himself of his sin; he serves his guilt up to itself and liberates himself in the process. Now Dante is ready to pass out.

II. They enter the passage to the terrestrial Paradise. Again an angel appears, a special divine messenger, it seems, who does not now sing one of the Beatitudes, which are intended for the purgatorial road, but another verse of Scripture (Matt. XXV. 34), *Venite, benedicti patris mei*, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom which has been prepared for you from the foundation of the world. These are held in the Church to be the words with which Christ will salute the faithful at the Last Judgment. Hence their employment here, indicating acceptance, the finality of the grand discipline. No erasure of the P now, it is burnt out.

Man has asserted his infinite nature in a supreme manner; the divine representative must appear in the form of an angel, the ministering spirit "being sent" (Heb. I. 14) just for this purpose. This, as before remarked, is the thought underlying angelology.

Thus they ascend, Dante goes to sleep when the Sun sets, and has a dream "which often knows the news before the event." A foreshadowing then it is of what is to come. Leah appears in the vision, being usually deemed the type of active life; "I go moving my beautiful hands around to make me a garland." Then Leah speaks of her sister Rachel, held to be type of contemplative life, "who never turns away from her mirror (God) and sits all day." They thus are supposed to correspond with Martha and Mary of the New Testament, and furthermore they to a certain extent prefigure two shapes about to appear in the terrestrial Paradise, Matilda and Beatrice.

This dream at the entrance of a new sphere corresponds to two other dreams, the entrance to Purgatory, Canto Ninth, and the entrance to the second set of Sins (Avarice, Gluttony and Lust) Canto Nineteenth. Also the dream is a part of the three nights spent in Purgatory. They are all a prophetic forecasting of the following day. They give in the instinctive form what is already conditioned in the soul of the dreamer.

Dante awakes and gets up. Virgil predicts also: That sweet apple of Paradise, the grand object of mortals, will to-day set thy hunger to rest. Another image drawn from the Garden of Eden and its Tree, which we have seen winding

all through the Purgatory. The attainment of that primitive innocence is the freedom from sin, the end of the purgatorial process.

But here at the topmost step, Virgil's guidance ceases. Dante has seen the temporal and the eternal fire (Purgatory and Hell), the negation and the overcoming of the negation. "Thou hast come to a part where I *of myself* discern no further." His limit has been reached, the limit of the vision of the ancient sages, who saw both punishment and the moral discipline of man, but not further. The sphere of reason ends, that of faith begins.

The talismanic words are spoken: "Free, right and sound is thy judgment." Free, not subject to appetite and passion; right, not going off in capricious paths aside from the Divine Order; sound, not partial but whole, uniting subjective freedom and objective justice. Dante now can follow his impulse purified; once it could lead him astray, but the purgatorial discipline has ended that and made virtue a habit.

The last is a famous line: "I crown and mitre thee over thyself," which is usually interpreted to mean, I make thee emperor and bishop of thyself, giving thee temporal and religious authority over thine own soul. A very strong statement, quite too strong; if such were the case, the poem ought to end here. For what is

then left to attain? Scartazzini (*Com. ad loc.*) has shown good reasons for making it refer only to the secular power and its virtues, while the religious power is yet to be attained in its fullness, with faith, hope and charity in the two Paradises.

### *POST - PURGATORY.*

Usually this portion of the Second Cantica is called the Terrestrial Paradise. It has already been noted how the idea of Paradise runs through the entire Purgatorio in its three portions (Introduction, p. 91). Now that idea is to culminate in its earthly manifestation, to which, however, is hereafter to be added its celestial manifestation in the Paradiso.

Before Dante's time the Mythus had attached the Terrestrial Paradise to the end of Purgatory, making the same the grand outcome and reward of the discipline of purgation. Thus Eden, though once lost, had been recovered by the mythical spirit of man. Moreover it had been also placed on the top of a high mountain, out of the reach of the Deluge, and above all storms and convulsions of the Earth. On the whole, this Mythus of Paradise and of the Fall is the greatest

World-Mythus, meaning more to man than any other; and Dante specially is its poet, far more so indeed than our Milton.

Like every great Mythus, this has unfolded into many new forms and significations; Dante simply took and transformed what had been transmitted to him. We shall briefly glance at the various materials which the poet has employed to construct his edifice.

1. First is the Garden "planted eastward in Eden," into which Adam and Eve were put and then expelled. It is the primitive home of innocence, which man lost through sin, but which he has to regain through a purgatorial discipline. The trees, the streams, the setting of nature are present in Dante's account, yet the whole is in many ways transformed. Thus the Old Testament gives the mythical germ.

2. The New Testament also furnishes a very important element, which is taken chiefly from the *Revelations* of St. John, who, however, reaches back to the ancient Hebrew prophets, notably to Ezekiel. The vision of the grand procession of the Bible and of the Church is inspired by the Apocalypse and is one of the leading facts of the Terrestrial Paradise. It gives the one side thereof, which we may call the objective side, being the institutional organism of the spirit, in which the individual is to adjust himself and to rise to his eternal portion.

3. The medieval Christian Mythus busied itself much about the Terrestrial Paradise. The location of Eden was somewhere in Asia according to the theological writers, who followed naturally the biblical account. Yet popular legend was inclined to look to the West for its Paradise, following the Greek, or probably the Aryan mythical tendency, which controls Dante in spite of his theological bias. (See Introduction to Purgatory, p. 28.)

4. Dante's contribution to the Mythus of the Terrestrial Paradise is really the greatest, namely, himself. He, the individual Dante, winds himself into the Divine Scheme, with which he is to put himself in harmony. He transforms the legend, and adds to it several important characters, especially the two women, Matilda and Beatrice. He is the one person who is to undergo purgation in the Terrestrial Paradise, which from this point of view may be considered to be specially Dante's Purgatory. Contrition, confession, forgiveness, indeed the entire spiritual movement of Repentance we see repeated here in the case of Dante, as he stands before Beatrice.

But this is not all. The grand scheme of reconciliation with the Divine Order is set forth in a spectacular scene, which is mainly derived from *Revelations*, as already stated. Then the spectacle itself is shown in its spiritual movement, its rise and its decline. Terrestrial Paradise, therefore,

is the place of the first man, Adam, and is the place of the last man of this poem, Dante; between these two men it has unfolded, and it will probably continue to unfold to the end of time. Moreover another element besides the human, namely the divine, is wrought into this paradisaical development. The dealings of God with man, beginning with Eden at the creation and coming down to the Christian Paradise, give the providential world which overcanopies the old and the new Adam.

It is manifest that the Hebrew Mythus dominates the poet in the present portion of his work, furnishing the grand outline of the Divine Order as well as the paradisaical legend. The Classic Mythus is, however, not absent, though subordinate; it, too, had its Garden of Hesperides far out in the west, and its Elysian Fields, as well as its primitive Golden Age and Reign of Saturn. Lethe and Eunoe are Greek in name at least while the part of Dante, the individual in Terrestrial Paradise, is told with a precision and classic clearness in strong contrast with the vague allegorism of the Oriental portion derived mainly from the Apocalypse. Here, also, we can find the two chief strands of Dante's culture, the Hellenic and the Hebrew, woven together in his work, the one with its stress upon the divine and the other with its stress upon the human.

We have called this portion Post-purgatory,



since it is also purgatorial for Dante, and it must be seen to stand in an intimate relation to the preceding Mid-purgatory. The latter purifies the man of his Seven Sins, which are of the disposition and of the will ; thus he is prepared to enter the Terrestrial Paradise, which shows to him the great Scheme of Redemption in its two phases, the outer organism of the Church and the Bible, and the inner spirit thereof, which is here voiced by Beatrice as she stands upon its chariot.

But we must not forget that Dante has again in this portion to go through a stage of purgation, which is the third and final one. In Pre-purgatory we observed him taking the initiatory steps, which are the three steps of Repentance (Canto IX), whereby he comes to a consciousness of his sins, which are graved upon his forehead. Then he is ready for the process of purification of disposition and will, which is the work of Mid-purgatory. But not only disposition and will are to be purged in the purgatorial ordeal of the Seven Sins, but also the intellect which denies is to be purified and made ready to ascend to Heaven. This sin of the intellect is veritably the sin against Beatrice, spirit-destroying ; it is that negation which the poet elsewhere calls Epicureanism, not a sin of the flesh, but of the soul, which denies its own infinite and eternal nature, and hence denies the very foundation of Purgatory. Fundamental is such a sin, yet

peculiar, requiring its own special place and kind of purgation. Dante as guilty of such a sin undergoes his discipline in Post-purgatory, which becomes a Paradise truly when this final form of his spiritual estrangement is overcome. Thus in all three Purgatories Dante has three great acts of repentance to perform, which rise in gradation from lowest to highest.

Very distinctly does the poet bring before us two earthly Paradises in the present *Cantica*, each with its special locality. One goes before and introduces the Seven Circles or Mid-purgatory, the other follows the same and completes the great purgatorial discipline. The first Paradise shows forth the primitive Eden with its state of innocence, ere sin has actually entered; the Serpent, seeking to slip in during the night, is driven off by the guardian Angels (*Canto VIII*). The second Paradise is the one that is reached after the experience of sin and the purgation thereof; man again has innocence, not the first but the second innocence, that which is attained through trial and by his own effort. Then there is the third Paradise in Dante, not found on Earth, but in Heaven, the infinite realm, to which a separate *Cantica* will be devoted.

But so far we have not yet gone. In the Terrestrial Paradise, which is now to be entered, Dante comes to the ground or cause of that which he has gone through hitherto, he beholds Beatrice

who sent Virgil to him in the Inferno as a guide, and who is herself to be his guide henceforth in the journey through the celestial regions. Thus he has reached the source of his guidance below, which he now sees and follows in person.

And here we may give a little study to the structure, which is somewhat intricate. Note first, that the architectonic principle of Post-purgatory is quite different from that of the two other portions. It was observed that Pre-purgatory was rather loosely put together, with divisions not sharply marked either in construction or meaning, while Mid-purgatory with its Seven Circles was more elaborately and minutely organized than any other part of the *Divine Comedy*. In Post-purgatory there is no movement up the Mountain by terraces one above the other, representing stages of progress—which is the structural principle common to the two previous portions. Another method of poetic construction is employed. Of the six Cantos (28–33) embracing this last portion, we may first make a short summary.

- I. (1) Terrestrial Paradise with its environment of physical Nature. Matilda.—  
C. 28.
- (2) Terrestrial Paradise with its grand pageant representing the Church.—  
C. 29.

- II. (1) The purgatorial element of this Paradise. Dante is reproached with his sins by Beatrice.—C. 30.
- (2) The purgatorial element continued. Dante's confession, repentance, restoration to Beatrice. Dip in Lethe.—C. 31.
- III. (1) Union of Church, Beatrice and Dante ; all move together to the Tree of Paradise, which buds anew. Separation of Beatrice from the pageant, which is despoiled.—C. 32.
- (2) Prophecy of Beatrice, who hints of State and Church restored, which prophecy Dante cannot understand. Dip in Eunoe, which purges his intellect. Lethe took away the memory of sin.—C. 33.

If we carefully examine the above summary, we observe, in the first place, two main threads, that of the Church with its paradisaical setting and its spectacular pageant, and that of Dante, the individual in movement with the same ; that is, the external order or plan of redemption, and the internal process thereof in the man, both of which must come together ; we may call them the objective and subjective sides in the Christian scheme of salvation. In the second

place we observe two great sweeps or movements of this Post-purgatory: one is toward union and harmony between Man and the Divine Order, wherein we behold Dante, the Church and Beatrice coming together; the other is toward separation, in which Beatrice passes over to Dante, and quits the Church, which becomes a prey to corruption and robbery. Still Beatrice prophesies the new time and the new reconciliation between Man and the great organism of the Divine upon Earth in both its ecclesiastical and political forms.

To state the same thing in its most general phase, there are two threads running through the whole: that of the Church and that of Dante; and there are two movements dividing the whole: that toward union, and that toward separation, of the two threads.

Such is the structure of Post-purgatory, different from the two previous portions of the *Cantica*, which have an ascent of a mountain dividid into various stages, while the present portion moves through a woody plateau up a stream, on the top of the purgatorial Mountain. Still we note a fact underlying both structures: there is a process of purgation here also, and there are the two sides to it, that of the individual and that of the Divine Order, which sides we have called the subjective and objective in Mid-purgatory. But the first has here no ideal

examples, being purely purgatorial, and Dante himself is the one sinner undergoing the process. The second side, that of the Divine Order, has here no angel, but the grand pageant of the Church instead, with Beatrice on its chariot, accusing, condemning, forgiving. Thus the whole shows the organism of Repentance in a new phase, yet with its two necessary constituents, the human and the divine, in the process of their opposition, reconciliation, union.

Accordingly in Post-purgatory the organism of the Church is brought into the foreground as the grand means of mediating the individual with the Divine Order. In Mid-purgatory the sinful man after his purgation was received above immediately by the angel without any apparent ecclesiastical mediation. It would seem that the sin of the Intellect, the sin against Beatrice, can only be expiated through the Church and its doctrine. Still this organism of the Church has an external temporal side, through which it can be assailed and corrupted; wherefore the individual must at last rise even out of it ere he ascend to Heaven. This is Dante's final glance back at Purgatory, as he gets ready to "mount to the stars."

*Canto Twenty-Eighth.* We have now come "to the place chosen as the nest for human kind." In this expression is contained the chief motive of interest in a Terrestrial Paradise.

Man, from the earliest times, has sought to picture to himself the locality and the surroundings of his origin, as well as his first relations to his creator. The Mythus has unfolded the idea of his primordial dwelling-place among every people probably; the mind, universal in its nature, and reaching backward as well as forward, asks, "Whence come I?" and, "Whither go I?" Now Dante puts both the first coming and last going in one spot: man starts from and returns to the earthly Eden.

The present Canto deals with the physical environment of Terrestrial Paradise, and has two distinct portions. The first is the description of Nature as she appears in this place; the second is the interpretation of these appearances of Nature by Matilda.

I. It was indeed "a new day," the third since the beginning of the purgatorial journey. Dante has come to "the divine forest," truly a Paradise or park, very different from the "dark wood" with which the *Inferno* starts. But we may well note the similarity between the beginning and end of Dante's earthly journey in external scenery; even the infernal forest is to be transfigured, and, as it were, redeemed.

A gentle breeze, "without any change in it," meets him, he observes that it bends the leaves to the westward. Then he hears the song of the birds in the branches attuned to the susurrus of

the trees, like that of "the pinewood on the coast of Chiassi." Next he comes to a stream, now flowing northward after making a turn from its eastward course, as will be noted hereafter (See diagram p. 47). There appears a solitary dame, singing and gathering flowers, whom Dante now addresses in the strain of a troubador, full of courtesy and love.

The stream is Lethe and the woman is Matilda. Yet the name of Matilda is not mentioned here, nor afterwards but once, and that one time in a very incidental way near the end of the last Canto of the Purgatorio. But what a dust she has raised among commentators! An historical figure; an allegorical figure; or both together and neither! At present we shall only try to observe with care what she does, noting that her character and functions shift through this and the following five Cantos.

Whatever she be elsewhere, just here she is the interpreter, specially the interpreter of Nature in Paradise. "I come ready for thy every question, as far as may suffice," she says to Dante. Moreover we mark in her a special delight in Nature, she laughs in the presence thereof, and explains her own laugh by an allusion to the Psalm *Delectasti*: "For thou, Lord, hast made me glad in thy work; I will triumph in the work of thy hands" (Ps. XCII, 4). She is generally regarded as representing active life,



which, however, seems very remotely connected with the present trait of her character.

II. Matilda now gives her explanation of the outer or physical phenomena of Paradise, which she traces at once to the divine source. The water, whence comes it, since rain is said never to fall here? This sound of the woods, how does it arise where there is no wind? Whereat she: "I shall tell how it proceeds *through its cause*, I shall purge away the fog which smites thee." Surely an interpreter of Nature is she, beholding therein the spiritual.

The first matter which she explains includes all the rest: the origin of the Terrestrial Paradise. It sprang from "the Highest Good, which does only its own pleasure;" God being perfect, pleases always to do the best. He created this place for man "as an earnest of eternal peace." But man has Free-Will, hence "through his own fault he stayed here but a little while." Such is the mythical conception of the first human being and his primal dwelling-place, as well as his relation to his Creator. Essentially Hebraic is the view, though it is in some form common to the race. The great dualism enters Paradise, and man has to depart, till he work his way back.

Matilda goes on to explain that the place is free from all exhalations and atmospheric disturbances, free from Nature in her trying, destructive appearances. The breeze is caused by the move-

ment of the physical universe, including the air, which revolves round the earth, and strikes the projecting mountain, strikes also the woods and causes the sound among the leaves. Thus the wind has no negative or diabolic element, but refreshes the body and makes music for the ear, being not of terrestrial but of celestial origin. Moreover it is impregnated by the plant-world of Paradise, whence it scatters seeds below on the earth. And this stream, double, "called Lethe on this hand, Eunoe on the other" is of divine origin, springing "from the will of God."

Such is Matilda's interpretation. She eliminates the evil side of Nature, and banishes it from Eden as created by the divine act. In like manner "He made man good and for good." She also indicates that this Paradise is the grand source of things below — at least of the vegetable world and of man. Created good by God — that is Matilda's note; the evil is abstracted both from Nature and from man, that is the paradisaical condition.

She carries her interpretation one step further and passes into the realm of what we now call Comparative Mythology. "Those who in the olden time sang the age of gold and its happy state, perchance in Parnassus dreamt of this place." The Heathen and the Hebrew verily were thinking one thought, and unfolding one Mythos at bottom: so we may say with Matilda.

“Whereat my poets (Statius and Virgil) laughed when they heard the last interpretation”—why did they laugh? The happy smile of assent, I say; the universal Dante they see rising above the narrow dogmatic Dante, and salute him with an unspoken approbation.

We may make the application to the present Canto, which shows its poet reading the Classic and the Hebrew accounts of Paradise. Dante had just read Ovid who gives the account of the Golden Age, and the Old Testament which gives the account of Eden. Into these two main sources then plays the medieval legend. Repeated are the traces of Ovid in the Canto—the allusion to Proserpine gathering flowers, to Venus wounded by her boy’s arrow, to the story of Hero and Leander, and especially to the Golden Age. Yet the setting for the whole is Hebrew, being the story in *Genesis*. But this too is wonderfully transformed, for the present Paradise is attained after the fall; it is thus Paradise regained, not lost. Note again that, in both Hebrew and Classic legend, the ideal world is past, vanished, while in Dante and the Christian legend it is to be recovered.

The poetic beauty of Dante’s description is of the highest, and perhaps takes the palm for all descriptions of Paradise, which are many. Milton’s is far more elaborate, it deals with external nature largely, and is less suggestive. Descrip-

tion for its own sake we find in Milton ; not so in Dante, who never forgets that the landscape is a spiritual reflection ; not so in Homer, who, in the bower of Calypso and in the garden of Alcinous, suggests the character of their occupants. Every object and every turn is transparent in Dante, while Milton's Paradise, rich though it be, has the overgrowth of a tropical jungle.

*Canto Twenty-Ninth.* We have just had in the preceding Canto the physical environment of the Terrestrial Paradise and the meaning thereof unfolded by Matilda. In the present Canto she moves along with Dante and the other poets, till they behold the grand spectacle which is the content of the place, and which is the attempt to figure the Church Universal.

I. In the introduction we have another trait of Matilda, somewhat different from that marked in the last Canto. She is not now the interpreter of Nature in the Terrestrial Paradise, but is a guide who leads Dante along the divine stream till he beholds the pageant of the Church, with Beatrice upon the Car. That is, she leads him to the great instrumentality of repentance and reconciliation with the Divine Order. Hence the song which she " goes singing, like a woman in love : " *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered* (Ps. XXXII, 1). Herein we catch the end whereunto she is conducting Dante, " like a woman in love." Vir-

gil can do nothing now; when Dante looks to him a little later for an explanation of the grand spectacle, he could only show a "face laden with amazement.

Such is the second function of Matilda; can we connect it with the first one designated in the foregoing Canto? Previously she carried all back to the Highest Good (*Summo Ben*); she conducted Dante to a divine view of Nature, now she leads to a divine view of the World-Order. In the previous Canto she gave a theoretic explanation, in the present Canto she guides to a spiritual vision, but does not try to explain the grand appearance.

Herein we may find her limit possible. She is preparatory, bringing Dante through the physical phase of Paradise to the Car of the Church, when a new person, still a woman, will undertake his further guidance and purification. In regard to repentance and remission of sin, Matilda exercises not the power, but gives the preparation.

We observe a turn in the stream of Paradise, which has its significance. Matilda and Dante move southward at first, against the current, then both banks make an equal bend eastward, toward the rising Sun. The East is indeed the great original source of light, physical and spiritual, first home of Church and Bible, which now appear, with miraculous flashings through the

forest like lightning. "And a sweet melody runs through the luminous air" — a strange musical accompaniment playing through Paradise.

II. We are now to behold a pageant which in its nature is spectacular and which extends through the rest of this part of Purgatory. A gorgeous Apocalypse of the Church, taken mainly from the book of *Revelations*, yet with touches from the old Hebrew prophet Ezekiel; thus the whole panorama is an evolution of the ages. Emphatically allegoric it is in the details, and hence streaked with dark uncertainties of meaning. We shall follow the pictures after the fashion of a panorama, and give some brief guesses at the leading points of significance.

1. *Seven golden candlesticks aflame, high as a ship's masts, are borne in front, and voices are singing Hosanna.* Manifestly the light going in advance of the procession and illuminating the same, of which it is a part. A light, too, in the day time; not a physical illumination, then, but a spiritual one, of some kind. Seven bands of light stream out after the seven candlesticks with all the colors of the rainbow. So far we may all see: the spiritual light going before, and illuminating what comes after.

Now comes the difficulty. What do the seven candlesticks signify of themselves? Let us say with most commentators, the seven gifts of the spirit, though the matter is not altogether clear.

St. John, from whom the grand image is taken, explains it himself as meaning the seven Churches of Asia, which Dante may have placed here as going in advance of the great Church, Christian or Universal. Light-giving to what follows both interpretations would mean in any case: where-with we may be satisfied.

Still this is not the end. What do the seven bands of flames mean? Why just seven? Then why ten paces apart are those on the outside? Here we are going to stop, though commentators have busied themselves much with answers to these questions, on the whole with no great result. Our choice is simply to connect the seven bands with the seven virtues opposite to the seven sins of Purgatory. Thus a relation is established between this pageant and the purgatorial process. Moreover the wings of the Griffon divide these seven bands quite as Dante divides the seven sins in Canto XVII, namely in a tripartite fashion.

2. *Following the candlesticks is the procession of the Bible with its Car.* This is made up of four and twenty Elders, representing the books of the Old Testament; of four animals standing for the four Evangelists (or Gospels) of the New Testament. Then after the Car two old men are going, a doctor and a bearer of a sword, namely Luke as the author of *Acts*, and Paul as the writer of *Epistles*; after these two

come four men "in humble guise," authors of the lesser Epistles, James, John, Peter, Jude; finally a solitary old man walking in his sleep brings up the rear—the man who chiefly gave to Dante the conception of the present pageant. "Round about the throne were four and twenty seats, and upon the seats I saw four and twenty Elders sitting" (*Rev.* IV, 4), a passage which probably suggested the present part of the spectacle. What St. John meant by his four and twenty Elders may be a question, but Dante here interprets and transforms the apocalyptic vision. Upon the general purport of the present scene, there is little difference among expositors, though the details again cause trouble. The colors which these shapes wear, their places, attitudes, the song sung by the Elders: "Blessed art thou among the daughters of Adam!" (Who is it, the Virgin or Beatrice?)—all these matters have called forth much ingenuity of interpretation, into which we are not inclined to enter.

3. *The triumphal Car is drawn by a Griffon, with two sets of women in movement alongside of its two wheels.* This Car in the midst of the four animals manifestly takes the place of the Throne in *Rev.* IV. Dante wishes to show movement, to indicate a process, hence the vehicle, which could have been suggested by Scripture, or by a Roman triumph (line 115),



or perchance even by the Florentine *Caroccio*, or War-Chariot. Observe that this Car is the center of the grouping of the Old and New Testaments, to the front and to the rear.

The meaning is the Church Universal, the instrument of redemption for man. The Griffon, half bird and half lion, represents Christ, with his twofold, divine-human nature. The wings, rising up into the bands of flame divide them as the Purgatory is divided. The three women at the right wheel are the three theological virtues, the four women at the left wheel are the four secular virtues. The two wheels of the Car have begotten a great twoness of opinion. Note some of these explanations: active and contemplative life, Old and New Testaments, Justice and Mercy, Hebrew and Gentile, Greek and Latin Churches, Writ and Tradition, Laity and Clergy, Benedictines and Franciscans, even St. Dominio and St. Francis. (See Scartazzini, *Com. ad loc.*)

In spite of all differences in matter of detail the general significance is clear: it is the Church Universal with the Writ or Letter illuminated by the Spirit coming forth to meet Dante in the Earthly Paradise. The grand organization of the means of salvation for the erring individual is brought forward in a gorgeous spectacular procession. When the sinful man has passed through the purgatorial process even on this earth he must be received into the Divine Order by its

visible representative, which is the Church Universal. Thus it is a new symbolization of the purgatorial process, and corresponds fundamentally to the principle and structure of Mid-purgatory.

In many forms the Hebrew imagination sought to embody this conception. The idea of the Church has at its fountain head the Old Testament. Its prophets struggle to utter this World-Order and to impress upon the individual the necessity of harmonizing himself with it. Hence it is that Dante seizes upon the Hebrew Mythos to express his conception, though he unfolds it into his own period. The Mosaic Ark of the Covenant may be justly considered the source of the image of this triumphal Car, and of what it represents, the Church. Chiefly, however, the mighty apocalyptic spirit of St. John the Revelationist, a Hebrew connecting the old and the new dispensation, found its most sympathetic response in the heart of Dante, whose whole poem is an Apocalypse, or Uncovering of the Future State.

But what shall we say to the artistic phase of this Canto? Dante becomes Oriental, he takes animals to represent men, for instance the four Evangelists; then the commingled beast, like the Griffon, he employs to represent the highest and holiest, Christ himself. Two animals taken and put together in order to figure the Man and the

God; the image is a degradation, though it be common in medieval symbolism.

Far truer and deeper is the Dante of the *Inferno* who uses the animal to represent the animalized, not the deified, man, and employs the commingled beast as a monster showing the deformity of sin, in which the human being subjects his reason to beasthood.

The result is the present Canto has a strong touch of the grotesque, which belongs not to the sacred but to the diabolic realm of spirits. The Griffon is not free of this trait by any means, yet the grotesque belongs truly to the demon, who shows evil. The three Ladies dancing at the wheel of the chariot seem not to be Faith, Hope and Charity, when engaged in such business. Dante abandons his Romantic Art and goes back to the Oriental, which has hardly been able to separate the human from the animal. (See Introduction to the *Inferno*, p. 129.)

We must confess to another objection to the present Canto: it is a work of the Understanding, not of the Spirit. It is ingenious, subtle, fitting like clockwork, yet as mechanical. A play of calculation and puzzling allegory; hence we often feel like not letting ourselves be puzzled with its details. We are inclined to let the wheel of the Chariot be a wheel and not hunt after any of the dozen or hundred things it may mean.

Still the main general drift of the Canto is

manifest and has a great thought: that of the place of the Church. Nor would we reject the apocalyptic form; but the details are too often disagreeably grotesque, painfully allegorical, a mere external sport of the Understanding, rising no higher than a certain mechanical ingenuity.

A structural point should be here noted by the reader. This Car of the Church belonging to Post-purgatory corresponds to the objective side of the process in Mid-purgatory, which receives the repentant and purified man into harmony with the Divine Order. But there such reception seems to come direct from Heaven through angelic ministration, while here it reaches the individual through the great ecclesiastical organism. Still both ways have at bottom one thought.

*Canto Thirtieth.* The Car is as yet empty, in the present Canto it is to receive its personality — Beatrice, whom Dante is now to behold. He is the grand example of the fall, the Adam of the Paradise, while the new Eve is not the temptress, but the one who draws him upward: *Das Ewig-Weibliche zieht uns hinan.* The Canto shows the grand epiphany of Beatrice to Dante, who is humbled and conscience-stricken for his misdeeds; then follows the intercession of the Angels, to whom Beatrice unfolds his guilt in his hearing.

I. The Candlesticks stop and also the procession, when the four and twenty elders turn to

the Car, and one of them shouts in song thrice: *Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, come with me* (Solomon's Song, IV, 8). This spouse is here doubtless Beatrice. A hundred angels rise on the Car and cry out *Blessed art thou who comest*, throwing flowers over a lady "who appeared to me with an olive wreath over a white veil, dressed in a red garment under a green mantle." Note the symbolism of colors: white, green, red, for Faith, Hope and Charity. The olive is the tree of wisdom and of peace.

Dante "felt the mighty power of the old love," and, quite overwhelmed, turned to Virgil for help, but Virgil had departed; how could he have anything to say in the presence of Beatrice? The poet now hears his name spoken by Beatrice, her first word, sweetest of all voices uttering his name. He turned to her at the sound: "I saw a Lady who before appeared veiled direct her eyes toward me from over the river." Great is Dante's anguish at her reproof, he beholds himself in the clear fountain, and notes his own shame. Thereupon she was silent.

The sense of guilt we mark here, though the exact nature thereof has been a subject of much discussion. Beatrice has now appeared and spoken to her lover; what does she signify in the present case. She certainly voices to Dante the strong conviction of sin. But she has something more to do, and this is the next thing to see.

II. After the humiliation of Dante comes the intercession for him: *In thee I have hoped, O Lord*, sung by the Angels to express Dante's purgatorial attitude, which has brought him thus far on his way, yet has still left some ice in his heart. But their sympathy, as if saying to Beatrice, "Lady, why dost thou so distemper him?" thawed his chill, whereat she began to address the Angels, which address is also intended for Dante.

She first tells her principle that "guilt and grief must be of one measure," that is, equivalent — the punishment must counterbalance the sin. She then gives a short history of Dante's career, in which she indicates plainly the three stages: the innocence and worth of his youth; the straying of his middle period, so that he has to receive the present discipline; then will follow the third period. Thus the famous trilogy of the poet's life, source of much discussion, is outlined. (See Witte, *Dante Forschungen*, Vol. 1.)

Here Beatrice states the theory of Dante's grand journey into the world beyond: "So low he fell that all means were too short for his salvation, except showing him the lost people." For this reason she descended to the Inferno and prayed Virgil to be his guide up to this point. "The high fate of God" would be broken unless he paid for guilt with "some scot of repentance" ere he passed Lethe. "The high

fate of God" means the divine will or power: "*Causaliter Dei potestas vel voluntas dici potest fatum*. So say Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine; so, too, is essentially Homer's conception of Fate, it is the will of Zeus. .

But the question arises, why has Dante to go through Hell in order to be saved? He had sunk so low that such was the only way. He had to experience the negative, he was so deeply involved in it that he had to go through it in order to get out of it. Now Inferno is essentially the serving up of negation to negation, showing it to be self-negative. This is the experience Dante obtains among the lost.

What was the nature of Dante's guilty conduct with which Beatrice upbraids him? At least two kinds of sins here are indicated: (1) Dante after her death followed other women (left me and gave himself to others); (2) intellectual delusion (false images of good and the way not true. l. 130).

Still further, what meaning may be specially attached to Beatrice in the present Canto? Mark her appearance on the Car of the Church, she is its central human principle; then she demands penitence, an inner sorrow from Dante for his sins. Justice she exacts, in proportion to the deed. To which Dante adjusts himself, with the aid and sympathy of the angelic intercessors.

*Canto Thirty-First.* It is manifest that Dante is going through the process of Repentance, and that the voice of Beatrice is bringing home to him the nature of his sins. In the present Canto we behold the work of penitence to be fundamentally the same as in Canto Ninth at the entrance of Mid-purgatory. Here also we observe the two phases thereof, which have already been called the subjective and the objective — or the internal change in the man, and his reception into the Divine Order.

I. In this subjective process of Repentance there are three stages — Contrition, Confession, Satisfaction. Already in the previous Canto Dante has manifested Contrition, his heart has melted in sorrow. In the beginning of the present Canto the Confession breaks forth: "Perplexity and fear propelled such a Yes from my mouth that eyes were needed to hear it." Still more strongly is spoken the acknowledgment: "Present things with their false pleasure turned away my steps as soon as your face was hidden." Then comes the Satisfaction, the complete self-surrender; "such recognition bit my heart that I fell down overcome;" a kind of death preparatory to the new life. "The nettle of penitence" pricked so strongly, that whatever else "twisted me unto its love, became most hostile to me." Such is the outline of Dante's inner process.



Beatrice in her reproaches corresponds; she drives him to see his sin and she calls forth his remorse and self-accusation. She demands this inward repentance before she can give purification. She may be considered the voice of the Church, or indeed of the Spirit, which requires that man repent ere he be forgiven. So she is an existence in the world, organized in the ecclesiastical order, hence she speaks from her seat on the Car.

Again rises up the question concerning the nature of Dante's offense. More strongly than in the previous Canto comes forth the charge that sensual indulgence was one of his sins. That "hearing the sirens," as well as the allusion to the *pargoletta* (girl) cannot well be without a thrust at his vice of "luxury." But Dante was also guilty of the second sin: a turning away from the Faith, a rejection of the grand means of salvation, which aberration will be more fully explained later.

II. Matilda now drags him through the stream of Lethe, to the other side where stood Beatrice and the procession. It is manifest that Matilda crosses the stream to reach him, she is the servant of that power which stretches out its arms to the returning sinner. Plunged into the waters of oblivion, in which the memory of the sin is taken away, he comes to the opposite bank for a new ordeal.

First, Dante is presented "within the dance of the four fair Ladies," the secular virtues; these bring him to the eyes of Beatrice who is looking at the Griffon, the divine-human emblem, which Dante also sees "standing quietly in itself, and transmuting itself in its idol" (image reflected in Beatrice's eyes). Then the other three Ladies — the theological virtues — come forward "dancing to their angelic measure." They intercede for Dante: "Turn, O Beatrice, turn thy holy eyes upon thy faithful one, who has taken so many steps to see thee; unveil to him thy mouth so that he may discern thy *second* beauty, which thou dost conceal."

Highly allegorical are these passages and about details there is and may well be much doubt and discussion. But about their general bearing there can be little question. They portray the objective process, whereby the repentant individual is received into the Divine Order as organized in this Terrestrial Paradise, that is, on Earth. Not the celestial order is here, that is to come and to come soon.

The significant steps of this process may be noted. The four secular virtues bring their initiate to the view of divine wisdom (Beatrice) whose content (suggested by the Griffon) is the incarnation, the God becoming man, and the man becoming God. Then the three theological virtues can be heard interceding with Beatrice to

show her second beauty — the transfiguration of the sensuous world — wherewith Dante obtains the transcendent gift. *Alles vergängliche is nur ein Gleichniss.* The first beauty is the sensuous,transitory one, the second is the supersensible, eternal one, which, it seems, Dante now beholds.

In the present Canto Beatrice performs a number of functions; she brings home to the sinful man his shortcomings and demands the full process of repentance; she reflects the process of incarnation; she possesses "the second beauty," evidently in distinction from the first one. Now can we put all these qualities of hers into one thought? She is the Spirit in its supreme potency, limit-transcending; thus she may be the principle of repentance, in which the finite, sinful man rises above himself; she images the grand transfiguration, the human becoming divine; she is the second beauty, that of the Spirit universally. Matilda is her handmaid here again.

It is not enough to call Beatrice the symbol of ecclesiastical authority, and Matilda the sacerdotal function, as Scartazzini does. Better is it to say with Philalethes that Beatrice is a symbol of the invisible, Matilda of the visible Church. Yet even this explanation is somewhat vague, and we need a more concrete idea to put into it. Indeed no abstraction seems to fit

Beatrice, inasmuch as she at once rises out of it, being in her very nature limit-transcending.

In the present matter one curious thing strikes us: why is now an additional Purgatory — a kind of Post-purgatory — placed in the Terrestrial Paradise?

The Seven Sins as organized by the Church, Dante has gotten rid of, one after the other, in Mid-purgatory. Clearly the great sin here is not one of the seven, it is the sin against Beatrice. What is this?

It is not merely the vice of sensual indulgence, which we have already seen expiated in the Seventh Circle. Beatrice means Spirit, whereby man transcends his limits and shows his infinite nature, she means the very function whereby man can go through the purgatorial process, the principle itself of Purgatory. Now Dante has sinned against this idea of Beatrice in two ways: in thought and in deed. He followed a new school, he probably leaned toward Averrhoism which denied the infinite nature of man — individual immortality — and so denied the whole foundation of man's redemption and purification. Thus he undermined the basis of this Purgatory, and we see that the sin against Beatrice is the universal sin, not a special one here punished, but the sin against Purgatory itself as a whole, as a process. Man's infinite nature denied and there is no purgation.

Such is the sin in thought, the sin in deed is the sensuous life corresponding. If there be no process of purgation for man, why should he not indulge his appetites? In fact what else is there to do? Hence Dante followed the Sirens, and was led off by the *pargoletta*, obeyed the impulses of his sensuous finite nature.

Here his theme touches Faust, the skeptical man, who can not believe in Truth and so takes to indulgence of the senses. To Dante now, as the writer of this poem, such a man is the arch-sinner or heretic, and if he dies impenitent, he is put into the burning sepulchres of the Sixth Circle of Inferno. To Goethe, however, such a man, honest in his doubt and persistent in his striving, is to be redeemed at last and reconciled beyond death with the Divine Order of the World. Such, in its highest potency, is the sin against Beatrice, which Dante here atones for, by a special purgatorial process.

Thus we see that the Terrestrial Paradise according to Dante's conception, is a place of purgation, in certain respects the severest place. Post-purgatory it may well be named, since in it the sin is purged which, as it were, goes back and denies the principle of all repentance and purification. Yet this sin is peculiar, being of the intellect and not of the deed or disposition, hence it has its own place in the grand purgatorial organism, and its own method of purgation.

*Canto Thirty-Second.* Dante has gone through the process of Repentance for his sin against Beatrice and has been accepted; she turns her eyes upon him and he gazes into hers so intently that the Virtues cry out, "Too fixed!" He must turn away, for he has still other relations, finite though they be; to gaze upon the Infinite in contemplation destroys the active man with the duty of the deed still upon him. Dante becomes a part of "the glorious army" of which the present Canto gives three grand phases.

I. The first is the return of the procession with Dante to the Tree of Knowledge which is made to sprout forth afresh. Mark that the procession comes to meet Dante, who is approaching from below, from the other side of the spiritual Universe. The Divine Order from above moves forth to meet the struggling individual, the new Adam, and help him back to Paradise, in which the Tree, bare through sin, becomes green again, whereto "an angelic note tempered our steps." When the procession has received him, it wheels on the right flank and counter-marches, returning toward the parts whence it came, all in due military fashion, like the Florentine Caroccio; purely a spectacle of the Church militant, whose warfare we are soon to witness.

At a distance of "perhaps three flights of an arrow," Beatrice descended; she was henceforth to be the guide of the new Adam, whose name

was murmured about, as "they circled round a plant despoiled of flower and leaf on each branch." The Griffon spared the tree, has Mercy; then touched it with the pole of the Car, whereat it blossomed anew. The grand act of Christ, bringing man back to Paradise and making it bloom once more; the restoration of man to Paradise on the one hand, and the restoration of Paradise on the other. The great Return is figured; the Car or the Church originated from the sin and now undoes it, going back to the fountain-head; it takes Dante, the new Adam, along. "So is preserved the seed of the righteous;" all is restored, after alienation, through repentance.

Medieval legend, with its deep suggestiveness, has not failed to connect the Cross with the Tree of Paradise in a vivid image. When father Adam was about to die he sent his son Seth to the Garden of Paradise to bring him a few drops of the oil of God's Mercy, which was still there treasured. The angel at the gate refused him entrance, but gave him a branch from the Tree of Knowledge, and commanded him to plant it upon Adam's grave, saying that when the same bore fruit, Adam would obtain the oil of God's Mercy. Seth obeyed the angel and planted the twig, but it never bore fruit till the death of Christ. Then from a branch of this tree the cross was made upon which Christ was crucified,

and thus the body of our Savior was the fruit suspended from this Tree. Adam and all the patriarchs then obtained the oil of Mercy, since they were taken out of Limbo and transferred to Heaven by a special act of the Lord's grace. So the legend and its purport have been handed down by an old commentator, Francesco da Buti — which legend has manifestly been transformed by the poet and put into his Terrestrial Paradise, which is the Paradise restored, not lost.

Such, then, is the double suggestion here: the restoration of fallen man to Eden, and the restoration also of the bare and deserted Eden. This takes place through the descent of Christ, which is, in general, indicated by the procession.

II. Hereupon Dante falls asleep, but he gives no vision, as he has done in the other three cases. Sleep seems in the present instance to cover a sudden unconscious transition to the second portion of the Canto, which unfolds the great separation. For now the spectacle is to go asunder.

When awake, Dante asks at once: Where is Beatrice? Truly his first question always; it is the inquiry of the spirit for the Spirit. But behold! The Griffon with the others (Evangelists, etc.) are mounting on high; wherein we may see the death and ascension of Christ. But the Car, the Church founded by him, is left behind. Still further, Beatrice is no longer upon it, but has de-



scended to the Tree, under whose "new leaves she is sitting on its root." The seven Virtues still surround her, with their lights in hand; then she addresses Dante: "Here thou shalt be a little while," here on Earth, "then thou shalt be with me without end a citizen of that Rome, whereof Christ is a Roman." Such is the promise, the Celestial Paradise. She bids him furthermore "keep thine eyes on the Car, and what thou beholdest, see that thou write when thou returnest yonder." This is the next spectacle.

III. Dante now witnesses in a rapid panoramic allegory the history and the disasters of the Church, which, widowed of Christ and separated from Beatrice, drops into Time and all the trials of Time. These we may briefly put together in their succession: (1) Persecutions of the Emperors — the Eagle rends the Tree and strikes the Car. (2) A fox, "abstinent of all good food," enters the Car — supposed to indicate heresy. (3) The Eagle feathers the Car, donation of Constantine. (4) The Dragon piercing the Car — schism — Mahomet. (5) The new feathering — gifts of Pippin and Charlemagne. (6) The Car puts forth seven heads and ten horns — becomes a monster, is animalized. (7) The harlot takes her seat upon the Car in place of Beatrice — papal curia under Boniface VIII. (8) The Giant, her lover, is seated beside her —

Philip the Fair, King of France. (9) She turns her eyes to me, the friend of the Emperor. (10) The Giant, "full of jealousy and wrath," scourges her and drags her out of sight — to Avignon. Such is Dante's continuation of St. John's Apocalypse down to his own time, giving in apocalyptic form the history of the Church and her tribulations in Time. Note that the present Canto joins on to Canto XXIX, which began this new Apocalypse, the repentance of Dante and his relation to Beatrice being interjected. The ecclesiastical organism is the one thread, the process of the individual is the other thread, both of which are to be spun together into one grand poetic fabric.

The structure of the present Canto with its three main thoughts is worthy of a recapitulation: (I) The restoration of the new Adam (Dante) to Eden, which is also restored through the coming of Christ; (II) The great separation, in which the Griffon (Christ) flies off to the skies, and Beatrice quits the Car of the Church, which is thus left an external organism merely, quite empty of spiritual content; (III) The history of this organism down to Dante's time. Previously was the sweep toward unity, wherein the Griffon and the Car, Beatrice, and finally Dante all came together and moved to the Tree of Paradise in harmony; then comes the sweep into disruption and separation, wherein the

turning-point is marked by Dante's sleep, for when he wakes he beholds the disagreeable reality in strong contrast to his ideal Church. Earth asserts itself again even in Eden, and the necessity of the celestial world begins to dawn.

*Canto Thirty-Third.* Great was the sorrow at the scene portrayed at the end of the previous Canto; Heaven and Earth, the celestial and terrestrial Virtues wept, alternately in song: *O God, the Heathen have come into thine inheritance, Thy holy temple have they defiled (Ps. LXXIX, 1)*. But Beatrice, though heart-struck, begins to prophesy, and utters hope gleaming through calamity: *A little while and ye shall not see me; and again a little while, and ye shall see me (John. XVI, 16)*. She places in front of herself the seven Virtues, steadfastly looking at them, while Dante, Statius and Matilda follow after her. Such is her attitude, truly the attitude of the Spirit, and in such a mood she states three important matters which pertain to Dante and his poem: first, she utters a prophecy of the new Leader who will restore Church and Empire; secondly, she enjoins upon Dante, after his intellectual purgation, to write down what he has seen, which writing will be this poem; thirdly, she tells Matilda to bring him to Eunoe, where he takes the final draught of purification, and the long purgatorial discipline comes to an

end. These three parts of the Canto we shall characterize briefly.

I. "The Eagle will not remain always without an heir," the Empire has not disappeared from the world. Hereupon follows the mysterious prophecy after the manner of St. John (*Rev. XIII, 18*), who speaks of the number 666, in which the name of Nero Cæsar has been found by taking the Hebrew letters at their numerical value and putting them together into a name. In like manner the number here mentioned (515—DXV), with the transposition of one letter produces *dux*, a leader. Moreover an Italian writer (*Guiseppe Picci*, cited by Scartazzini *Com. ad. loc.*) very ingeniously extracts from this number 515 the name of *Kan Grande de Scala, Signore de Verona*, by taking the numerical equivalents for the Roman letters. Thus Dante still further makes himself the successor and continuator of St. John in the grand Apocalypse of the future, even to the strange play with numbers.

Who is this *dux*, or leader, "sent of God," "who will slay the Whore and the Giants?" Many have been the answers. A German emperor, Henry of Luxemburg, who came into Italy in 1310; an Italian secular leader, like Ugucione della Faggiuola; then a great religious leader, some Pope, and even Christ himself have been selected and defended in more than one

hundred books (according to the estimate of Scartazzini) on this subject alone. Prodigious ingenuity in time-killing! enormous energy wasted in chasing down an historic probability, which, if it were clutched, would be only smoke, a mere label or name at most! An Italian expositor has reached the point of seeing in this leader a prophecy of Victor Immanuel. A German is not behind hand with the idea that the allegoric greyhound (same as *dux*) is the Emperor Wilhelm the First.

Of all these people Can Grande della Scala, Lord of Verona, has evidently the best right to Dante's vaticination. Can Grande began his leadership in 1318, which year is considered a little late for the composition of the *Purgatorio*, yet even the *Inferno* seems to allude to him in one passage (Canto I. 101). Still the main fact is, Beatrice says that the deliverer will come, says so to Dante. All-important it is to have such a hope in this life. The special form of it varies with the centuries; we do not wonder that Dante's words clothe themselves with new events and new persons in the passing of the generations. In the time of trial Beatrice whispers the up-bearing speech which permits no despair. So the world is destined to have many more fulfillments of this prophecy, and many more books pointing out the true hero.

II. More important, according to our notion,

is the command of Beatrice to Dante to write down these words and "teach them to the living about the life which is a running unto death." So St. John too was ordered to write what he saw in a book. And the main content of the book is to be this stripping and robbing of the Tree of Paradise. Sin we call it, inasmuch as it "offends God with blasphemy of deed;" the old Adam, first transgressor, was punished "five thousand years and more," till the Savior "punished in himself that bite" into the apple forbidden, whose tree is "so high and so outspreading at the top," veritable image of Heaven, lofty and protecting, wherein we have an outline of the Hebrew Sin-Mythus, the frame work of this poem. Again we hear a reproof from Beatrice to Dante, now on the intellectual side, as he cannot understand the true meaning of this story of Paradise and its tree. "I see thee in thy intellect made of stone," no alertness, no elasticity, what is the matter? Dante declares that he has the image of what she has told him "stamped on his brain," still her word "flies so far above my sight that the more I try the more I lose it." Surely a lack of spiritual insight, a lack of appreciating the gift and very character of Beatrice, is here the charge and the confession. She is the limit-transcending, infinite; Dante is still finite, still sunk in limitation, unable to rise. This is the point direct and keen, to

what she now brings home to him. "That school which thou hast followed" cannot "follow my word," cannot truly comprehend the thought of Beatrice. So much is clearly affirmed: but what school specially is it? Here again conjecture, difference, opinion deluge us. In all probability, however, this school is the school of Averrhoes, who asserted the eternity of matter and denied the eternity of the individual soul — denied fundamentally what Beatrice is, namely, the limit-transcending spirit, which must be able at last to transcend even the limit of Death. Thus it is that "your way is as far from the divine way as Heaven is from Earth." Intellectual negation had been one of Dante's sins, so that he could not see divine truth, yet even this fact he has now forgotten: "I do not remember of ever having strayed from you." But he has been dipped in Lethe, which brings oblivion of sin, yet does not bring the insight into the Divine Order, now very necessary to Dante ere he rise higher. In other words, Lethe is merely the negation of a negation, not the positive gift.

III. Accordingly we have the last rite of Purgatory, which is again performed by Matilda, handmaid to Beatrice; Dante is dipped into the stream of Eunoe, the second of the two streams of Paradise, wherein "his half-dead power may be revived." This last baptism prepares him to ascend to Heaven, renewed and remade

he rises from the sacred wave, "pure and disposed to mount to the stars." Eunoe in its root-word (*Nous*) suggests mind, intelligence; both the name and the thing are Dante's invention; probably we see him here coining a Greek word for his use. Lethe as a stream or fountain belongs to Heathen mythology, but Eunoe is mythologized from a Christian conception by the poet himself. I find a good deal of trouble in picturing the location and direction of these two streams in the Terrestrial Paradise. "On this side Lethe," and "on that side Eunoe"—just where? Or perchance everywhere? (See Canto XXVIII, 127-132.) But the spiritual fact comes out: both streams spring "from one fountain," which comes directly "of God's will;" it is a sort of water which, "from one beginning *separates itself from itself*," and is twofold (line 117 of the present Canto). Note again that it is Eunoe which gives the positive result: "it restores the memory of the good deed," and more; Lethe ends in mind-erased, Eunoe is spiritual restoration. As we understand him Dante is seeking to mythologize that most difficult thought, the duplex-character of the negative (see page 191).

Dante has reached Eunoe through the calamities of the Church, not through the mediation thereof, the Church being in Time and exposed to corruption. One thing, therefore, remains: the individual must rise even out of the Church to



the highest. The mightiness of individuality is thus the last note of this *Cantica*, heralding the *Paradiso*.

Manifestly it is the main point of the present *Canto* to show Dante in the process of getting free of his final and deepest imperfection, which we have called intellectual negation. He cannot write till this be done. Verily he is having a purgatorial time of it throughout. First was the long purgation of the Seven Sins, then the repentance of the sin against Beatrice and the dip in Lethe, which however leaves him a sinless blank, but, we must suppose, with the same mind. He cannot yet truly comprehend the spiritual with that mind, he does not understand its literature in *St. John* and the Bible, having "a petrified intellect," petrified in finitude, not limit-transcending as Beatrice herself is, who addresses to him this reproach. He does not see a spiritual purport in things, especially in writing, so he must be dipped in Eunoe, that he may be able to behold spiritual things when he enters Heaven where all is transfigured. Moral purgation comes first, the cleansing from the Seven Sins, that he may do the good; then follows spiritual purgation that he may see the divine and set it down in writ. This poem, we must think, originates from the dip in Eunoe, or from the drinking thereof by the poet; a drop or two from the same fountain can well be swallowed by the

person who reads the *Divine Comedy*. And specially needful is such a draught to us commentators, who write about the poem after Dante has written it, for of all the men in this world is not the one who sits down to write a commentary usually known as the man having a "petrified intellect?"

## *DANTE'S PARADISO.*

*Introduction.* Hitherto we have been on the Earth and have had terrestrial imagery; now there is to be a mighty sweep upwards into the celestial world. Dante painfully climbed the Mountain of Purgatory, but henceforth he must take to wing and fly, pushing beyond and beyond till he reaches the great end, which is to see God face to face, wherewith this apocalyptic journey comes to a conclusion in divine Blessedness.

We may, accordingly, state the one underlying struggle of the *Paradiso*: it is the transcendent struggle of the finite man to overcome his finitude, and thereby to reach the Infinite. No rest is there for the human soul with its aspiration till this be attained; oceanic is the heart-beat of the poem, rising, dropping, rising again  
(383)

to the end, which is the grand Apocalypse, the vision of the Divine.

From the start the poet feels and proclaims the total inadequacy of his material—speech, image, even thought; every utterance dashes against the limits of utterance in its desperate attempt to utter the unutterable. Yet up and at it again, for the thing must be told unto man below. All kinds of finite terms and forms are clutched and pressed into service from stage to stage, and then thrown away as unfit; yet up and at it again! So the struggle fluctuates up and down till the infinite form is reached which is just the seeing of the infinite. Can this be forced into human speech? Somehow it must be spoken; the very inadequacy of expression becomes the mightiest expression, the limit itself points to the unlimited, and Romantic Art reaches its culmination in this Paradiso of Dante. Indeed it quite oversteps itself, and begins to pass somewhere outside the domain of art. Well, what if it does! The matter after all gets itself told, and that is just the important thing.

The present part of the *Divine Comedy* is certainly a very peculiar experience. The two extremes of the religious spirit come together, and blend—scholasticism and mysticism: narrow scholasticism laying down its rigid forms, soaring mysticism defiant of forms. Yet both are struggles to reach the Divine, truly the uttered

and the unutterable. What a long heroic effort, employing every sort of appliance, theological, philosophical, artistic, till the final appearance of the mystic vision! Then the tongue fails, language breaks down, and the poem has to come to an end through the impotence of its instrument; no more poetry is possible at that height. And yet the poem has succeeded in expressing itself in thirty-three Cantos.

I. The fundamental form in which this vast celestial sweep takes place and utters itself, in so far as it is utterable, is the *Mythus*, made by no individual but by the race, yet seized upon and transfigured by the poet. The *Mythus* of the *Apocalypse* is the present one employed, the grand uncovering of the Future State, of which the *Paradiso* is that phase or portion which reveals the condition of the Blessed after death. Not Dante, not even Christianity is the maker of this *Mythus*, it has come down the ages with the rest of the *Apocalypse* of futurity. The Orient, Greece, Rome had their abodes for their departed heroes in many forms; the thought lies deep in human consciousness that the reward of excellence cannot possibly be given in this life. Goodness once realized in a human soul cannot pass away; the man who chooses the eternal portion here and now is to possess it forever. Death truly beheld is not the end of the Eternal, but the attainment thereof, not mere negation but the

negation of a negation. The Mythus is the shadowing forth of this deepest phase of man's nature, and is the offspring of Universal Religion which insists upon reward for the good deed. Thus in Dante's poem we are first to reach down to the great mythical undercurrent which flows in Time through the hearts of all humanity.

The Paradiso of Dante is especially connected with the Hebrew Mythus, of which it is the direct outgrowth and fulfillment. This Hebrew Mythus starts with the Garden of Eden, the primordial Paradise of innocence, then runs backward in its development to the Fall of the Angels and forward to the Fall of Man. Two great Falls, one in Heaven, the other on Earth, are the spiritual beginnings of the Hebrew Mythus, whose vast outlines remain to the end and dominate Dante's poem. In both cases the Creation is pre-supposed, which is also told in the ancient Hebrew writ.

Such is the one great side of this supreme product of Hebrew spirit—the Creation and the double Fall connected therewith, angelic and human. Now let us cast a glance at the other side, which is the restoration from the Fall, the redemption of the lost, which is the Christian addition. Mythus we shall call this addition too, being really the counterpart of the old paradisaical account. Much of it indeed, is historical, yet the whole of it is mythical, being something

altogether more than history, which confines itself to the external occurrences in time and place. But the Mythus goes beyond time and place and images what truly occurs in the spirit. For instance, that Christ went up to Jerusalem and that he preached the Sermon on the Mount may be taken as historic facts; but his resurrection is a spiritual, not an historical occurrence. Now both the historic and spiritual occurrences we shall call the Mythus of Christ, making the totality of his record. Thus Dante treats the matter, as we understand him, since the poet in the deepest fiber of his being is mythical. So we shall speak freely, in this attempt to grasp Dante's work, of the Mythus of Christ, not to lessen but to heighten its spiritual fact and its universal significance for man, who is also mythical.

Accordingly in the Hebrew Mythus, as unfolded in Time and elaborated by Dante, we behold two supreme personages, Adam and Christ, typical men, the most important on our Earth, placed at the two turning-points of human destiny in its fall and in its rise. The two world-men, of all others; between them and through them moves humanity, they are the moulds, as it were, of our European soul-forms, the shape-givers of our primal religious conceptions. These two men, sprung of Hebrew spirit, made a strong impression upon Dante; in his *Paradiso* both have a very significant place, and they are repeatedly

brought together in a vivid flash of the imagination. Such is the grand dualism represented on Earth by Adam and Christ, or the Fall and the Rise, the limited and the limit-transcending.

This same dualism is mythically projected beyond the Earth into the Heavens in the Fall of the Angels, the first created of God. Part of the angelic host remained faithful, the other part sinned through disobedience under the leadership of Satan, who, in his mighty Fall from the skies, struck our Earth and produced its present geographical shape, and, as his masterpiece, caused the Inferno, according to Dante. Thus we have the good and the bad angels, whose antithesis is driven to its highest point in God and Satan. Far back in the primordial Mythus, therefore, lies the separation into good and evil and their conflict; Aquinas declares that Satan must have sinned the first moment of his creation. So near is evil brought to the primal creative act of deity even by the theologians. But the main point is that here we mark another important phase of the Hebrew Mythus — that of angels or angelology — which will also be taken up into the Paradiso and fully unfolded.

The angel we have already met and duly considered in the Purgatorio, where it is often employed as the connecting link between man and God. The sinner, when he rises out of his sins and transcends his limitation, beholds and indeed



is the Divine; hence at that point, the angel appears and directs him upward. In Post-purgatory, the angel is an intercessor for the repentant man. In the Inferno we had much to do with the demon, half man and half beast; his counterpart in the Paradiso is the angel, half human and half divine. Both sorts are mythical beings, commingled shapes, wholly outside of nature, monstrosities, created by the imagination to show some phase of spirit.

Still further, in the Paradiso the angels have their own special Sphere which is the Ninth Heaven or Primum Mobile. They are arranged in nine Orders, and to each Order is assigned a Sphere. This is a new development of the Mythus, first fully unfolded in the work falsely ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite. (For a fuller account see the commentary on the Ninth Sphere, Cantos XXVII-XXIX.)

Such is, in general, the legend of the Paradiso, we may call it after its origin the Hebrew Sin-Mythus, imaging those two supreme events of man's spiritual history, the Fall and the Recovery, and shaping for all time the two chief world-men, Adam and Christ, the sinner and the savior. Still further, it projects far back of these terrestrial events and persons a celestial scene, the conflict of two supernatural agencies in the shape of colossal personages, who image

the mighty dualism of the Universe, good and evil, God and the Devil. Overwhelming has been the influence of this Semitic Mythus upon the human soul ; the religious spirit of the Occident has moved and is still moving in its lines ; Mahomedanism in the Orient may be fairly held to be an offshoot of this primitive Hebrew Mythus. Some learned men declare that it is not Hebrew, but reaches far back into the East. Such a view is quite probable, for the true Mythus is an evolution of the ages, from the remotest down to the present. Yet we may be certain that the Hebrew mind received it and moulded it anew ; from the Old Testament and the New, both of them Hebrew books, it came to Dante and has come to us, unfolding still, yet never losing the stamp of its origin. Thus we note again that the poet has only caught up and transfigured what Time had given him, in this case the very best thing of Time, the greatest, deepest, most lasting mythical treasure of the race.

But the period comes when the Mythus needs interpretation. The understanding begins to hammer at it, to burrow into it, to pick it to pieces. A new spirit arises with new tests of Truth, the old mythical faith begins to get lost in culture, the keen skeptical intellect pries underneath and proclaims, often with much noise and parade, certain contradictions that it has found in the creed of the fathers. And there are contra-

dictions, no doubt about it. The main source of them can always be designated, and is noticeable everywhere in Dante's *Paradiso*; the infinite meaning is sought to be uttered in finite forms; the expression is limited, the thing expressed transcends limits; the image, pushed to its last capacity, still has bounds, but God is unbounded. What a prodigious effort in this *Cantica* to measure in speech the immeasurable! Verily the contradiction is manifest, is indeed just the thing dwelt upon unceasingly by the poet, in order to whip his reader beyond the senses, beyond even the picture, which is painted only to be wiped out again. Thus the form and the spirit are in a desperate struggle through the entire poem; the image, the great instrumentality of poetry, has to be broken and turned into thought. In other words the *Mythus*, which is a work of the imagination, is to be relieved of its pictorial limits by being transferred into an abstract dogma, which is a product of the understanding. Dante, as a student of philosophy and as a man of universal culture, has also this element in his being, though it is not fundamental, since his spirit is at bottom mythical. This transition, just described, of the pictorial *Mythus* into abstract doctrine, gives the science of Theology, which plays a very important part in Dante's *Paradiso*.

II. Dante's work is in a sense encyclopedic,

containing the lore of his period. But the marvelous fact is, this encyclopedia of Heaven and Earth is not a dictionary but a poem, an organized, fully articulated, living thing. Theology, as the great science of the age, stands in a vital relation to Dante himself, and takes an organic place in his *Divine Comedy*. Its special development is naturally in the *Paradiso*, in which the Mythus, partially at least, must be transcended.

The theological activity of the medieval spirit lasted long, indeed still lasts and must last; but its culmination was in Thomas Aquinas who flourished a little before Dante's time, and stands for the greatest expounder of the scholastic doctrine. Indeed he may be fairly called the greatest of all Christian theologians, Catholic or Protestant. Now Dante studied the *Summa* of Aquinas, absorbed it and in a degree transformed it, so that, while retaining the Mythus, he gives the theological explanation of the same.

In fact, Christian Theology is essentially the interpretation of the Hebrew Sin-Mythus to the Understanding. A distinction of races has been sometimes seen in this matter, the Aryan spirit is said to demand a metaphysical as well as a mythical statement of the great problem of sin. However this may be, Theology accepts the Mythus as its fundamental substrate, and then unfolds out of it the dogma and the creed. The Fall and the Redemption, in the stories of Adam and of

Christ, are the main outlines in which all Christian Theology moves, and surely these outlines are very large. Yet it often goes back and includes the second adumbration of the Fall, in the case of Satan, whose alienation it has explained and motivated very fully. Of course the Creation of man is closely connected with his Fall; according to some theologians Adam stayed a little over six hours in Paradise. Finally the divine Creator, in whose plan were primordially embraced the Fall and the Redemption, enters as the grand figure whose work Theology seeks to explain in part, and in part leaves it just as the Mythus has transmitted it from the beginning down to the present.

Theology, therefore, though it rationalizes, never completely cuts through and becomes rational; it always falls back upon the Mythus at last, and the immediate faith in that. In Dante's *Paradiso* we see the Theology of it springing directly out of the mythical setting, and vanishing back into the same. The theological discussions, accordingly, are a time-growth of the theme of the poem and belong to it organically; without them it would not be a complete spiritual picture of the Hebrew Sin-Mythus in its total development through the ages down to Dante's time. This is not saying that they are interesting to read or poetical in the narrow sense; but they are organic.

The two most important pieces of writing in

the world are undoubtedly contained in the Bible. The one is the first chapters of Genesis in the Old Testament, the other is the Gospel (or Gospels, though they are really but one) in the New Testament. These two pieces of writing are the primordial expression of the Hebrew Sin-Mythus, and have as their respective centers two supreme characters, Adam and Christ, who have been already united in the one grand cycle of human spirit, mythically conceived as the Fall and the Rise, or the alienation and the return. Yet there is a difference between the two; the one is created directly by God in his own image, the most perfect man, coming straight from the hand of the divine artificer, by an almighty fiat; the other is called the Son of God, fatherhood is now added, and the tie of family, of love, is imaged rather than the power of the Maker. Still the chief difference is that the second overcomes the deed of the first, or perchance completes it into the total process of the human soul and of the World's History. Now both these pieces of writing above mentioned are mythical in the best sense of the word, indeed must be so in order to produce their eternal influence upon the people, whose final soul-form is also mythical, not theological by any means, except a little so on the outside.

Let it be affirmed again that Dante, especially in the *Paradiso*, has both sides—the Hebrew Mythus and the interpretation of the same ac-

according to medieval theology. And moreover, this interpretation is the more temporal and transitory part of the poem, that part of it which arises and vanishes in time. How fresh is that old, old Mythus for us to-day, while this theological construction of it, though far more recent, seems already quite antiquated! Truly the Mythus unfolds with man himself, is just as old, just as young. Every age will have its new rehabilitation of it, theological, philosophical, ethical, which, however, will pass away like the outer body, while the mythical soul thereof remains eternal.

Dante is first of all, a poet, hence the grand outlines of his poem are mythical; but he is also a theologian and a child of his age, hence the filling-in is theological, political, ethical, personal. Still we must not forget that theology too has its roots in the Mythus, and, therefore, is deeply cognate with the poem. Moreover this two-foldness is not peculiar to Dante, but can be traced back even to the New Testament. The Gospels are essentially mythical, the Epistles essentially theological. St. Paul and other early apostles had already begun their interpretation of the Christian Mythus, and indeed of the entire Hebrew Sin-Mythus from the Christian standpoint.

We may see the theological discussion shooting up everywhere out of the legendary narrative

in the Paradiso. Dante, in his story, ascends to the Moon, where he finds those who have broken their vows through some external compulsion. But can the man be externally compelled unless he so chooses? Herewith rises the whole subject of Free-Will and Determinism — perhaps the most fundamental question in Theology, and the main theme, according to Dante himself, of the entire *Divine Comedy*. When the poet reaches the planet Mercury, another problem springs up: the contradiction between God's justice and man's justice, illustrated often in events of the World's History and especially in the crucifixion of Christ. Thereupon must follow a discussion of the place of the Devil or the Negative in the Divine Scheme, that subtlest of all principles, which must be present somehow, yet must be gotten rid of somehow; the hardest of all nuts for Theology to crack, indeed it does not try to crack this nut, but sets up its limit just here, declaring: Over this border Faith only. So too Dante for the most part. Yet again and again he will return to the conflict and tackle that infinitely elusive principle, veritably the Devil himself, and have a desperate tussle of intellect with him, showing many shifting shades of victory and defeat.

Thus the poet theologizes along his journey, yet keeps up the lines of his story. Through his procedure we feel that the Mythos pure and



simple, in its original nakedness, can no longer satisfy wholly; it must, up to a certain point at least, give an account of itself, even justify itself before the tribunal of the Understanding, whereat the theological element begins to show itself. And yet mark again! Theology has its limit, certain things about the Mythus it will not try to explain; all cannot be and must not be made comprehensible; and so theology itself finally proclaims faith as the ultimate religious virtue—which usually means faith in some phase of the great Mythus, for example the resurrection.

In such manner Dante will go through his *Paradiso*, quite every mythical step he takes in his journey will call up a theological question. Theologems, we may name them: the Fall and the Atonement, Free-will and Providence, Grace and Predestination, God and Satan—what are they but developments and interpretations of that soul-dominating Hebrew Sin-Mythus, of which Dante's poem is one of the many outgrowths, probably the greatest of them all? And now we may proceed to consider how the poet has constructed his edifice, whose architecture is by no means the least of its marvels.

III. In the material construction of the *Paradiso* the first fact is that the Earth is taken as the physical center of the Universe, and the heavenly spheres move around it in successive

order. Dante starts from this physical center and passes upward from sphere to sphere till he reaches the Empyrean, which is a center of another kind, being both center and circumference in one, truly the spiritual or universal center not conditioned by Space or Time.

And here we come upon the second and fundamental fact in the structure of the Paradiso: it has ten Spheres, separated into two main divisions. The first of these divisions is made up of nine Spheres, bounding one another, limited, finite; this we may call in general Finite Heaven. The second division is made up of the one Sphere, which is nevertheless all the rest, not bounded by them but including them, unlimited, infinite; this we may call Infinite Heaven.

Many ways of sub-dividing the ten Spheres of the Paradiso have been suggested, Dante himself hints of several. The planetary world with its seven celestial bodies may be looked upon as a division by itself; to it can be added the Fixed Stars, which end the Visible Heavens. With the Ninth Sphere we enter the Invisible Heavens, yet finite still, "revolving with a velocity almost incomprehensible" in its desire to reach the Tenth Heaven, the realm of divine repose. Just at this point, doubtless, is the main distinction, which strongly marks the Tenth Heaven or Sphere (the Empyrean) in contrast with the other nine. See *Convito* II. 4: "This (Tenth

Heaven) is the supreme edifice of the world, in which the whole world is included, and outside of which nothing is; it is not in any place, but was formed solely in the Primal Mind." Such is the Empyrean, as it is very emphatically distinguished from the lower Spheres.

Now this twofold division suggests the spiritual theme of the present Cantica and the mighty struggle thereof: that struggle of the human soul, finite yet seeking the Infinite. All the nine lower Heavens are particularized, each by itself; yet they are also in the tenth, which is the one Heaven. In like manner all the individuals below in the nine Heavens are above in the tenth, which has the Divine Presence; the same fact holds true of the Angels in the Primum Mobile. We must see, therefore, that this vast celestial organism is fundamentally divided into the limited and the limit-transcending, and thus it becomes the outer colossal image of the inmost nature of each individual soul, which in its heavenly journey both manifests the same twofoldness and brings it to unity and peace.

The old Ptolemæic system of astronomy, which made the Earth the center of the physical Universe, still prevailed in the poet's time. One must, therefore, forget his Copernican theory, and resign himself to the image of successive Spheres. The symbolism of the Heavens holds

notwithstanding ; the outer semblance is but a ladder to spiritual vision.

The next matter in order is the subdivision of the nine Spheres below the Empyrean. Here again there may be various views. But Dante in the organization of the angelic Hierarchy, which determines the Spheres under the, Primum Mobile, divides the nine Spheres into three Triads, as follows: first Triad—Moon, Mercury, Venus; second Triad—Sun, Mars, Jupiter; third Triad—Saturn, Fixed Stars, Primum Mobile. Over, yet including all these, is the tenth Heaven, the Empyrean. Again we note Dante's play with numbers, especially with the number three, suggestive to his mind always of the Trinity.

The detailed distinctions which the poet has made between these three Triads of the celestial Spheres we shall elaborate when we come to the special consideration of them further on. Here, however, we may state that the first Triad is called the Lower Heaven, inasmuch as it contains the less perfect souls; the second Triad is called the Middle Heaven, which term designates its position physically and spiritually; in it the souls have sought to bring the Divine down to man, to mediate the celestial with the terrestrial; the third Triad is called the Upper Heaven, since its spirits have the glance turned wholly away from the Earth upward to the Empyrean.

A threefold division, therefore, we observe in

the finite celestial Order, yea, a doubly three-fold division, namely three Triads. (See Par. XXVIII.) But mark well the fact! there is also a fourth division, over the three others and including them all, hence really no division. Still we, along with Dante, have to make it, in order to sweep it away, or better, in order to transcend it; thus only are we able to reach the thought of the Total or Infinite Heaven, distinct from all, yet embracing all — which last characteristic is just its essential distinction. What a subtle dialectic play between Finite and Infinite! But not by any means a word-juggle or even a thought-juggle, as some muddled critics have held; rather is it the very essence of this Heaven, and of this Earth too.

We saw in the Purgatorio a tripartite division, which is inherent in the theme of that Cantica. But here we have to add a fourth division, which reaches back and infolds the other three, and is just that which makes the present song truly into a Paradiso, overspanning in its very architecture the purgatorial realm. At this point again we watch the mighty struggle of Dante's soul to break the bounds of imagination, and to grasp with limited means the unlimited.

It is also to be noted that from this tenth Sphere or Infinite Heaven, not only the Paradiso but the entire *Divine Comedy* arises. At the very beginning of the Inferno Virgil appears, in

order to conduct Dante, and Virgil is sent by Beatrice who is moved from the Empyrean. Then the angel comes down from above and drives away the demons who oppose the passage of Dante and Virgil to the city of Dis (*Inf. IX.*). Also the continued appeal of Virgil to the Will of Heaven is the mighty weapon with which he smites the devils into silence and submission. And so the journey goes on from the Inferno to and through the Purgatorio, into which the Heavens are always breaking by means of angelic ministrations and song. Thus the vast cycle of the *Divine Comedy* begins and ends, in the Empyrean, itself the image of the Infinite. -

Also the construction of the Paradiso gleams through Hell and Purgatory. There is a structural unity in the three Canticas, a common principle in the three great divisions of the edifice. In all, there is a movement through concentric circles, which grade dead mankind in the future world according to their character and deeds. A hole in the Earth, a mountain on the Earth, the spheres above the Earth—all are rounded and enringed into a series of spirit habitations, which express punishment and reward. The whole physical Universe is thus seized upon to image the soul of man in its various stages on its way from the finite world to the infinite.

Such is, in general outline, the colossal organization of Dante's Paradiso, unfolding the final

phase of the Mythos of the Future State. Symbolic we see it to be, yet the poet is careful to tell the fact to us; and to make us stretch our spirits, that we grasp the meaning. Through this organism, Dante is passing, led by Beatrice; through it, we also are passing, led by Dante. The final question with us is, Can we take the step across—that last wonderful step across into the Empyrean, which is the tenth Heaven and yet all Heaven, which is just there and yet everywhere?

IV. The artistic procedure of the poet in the *Paradiso* will be in a variety of ways different from that of the two preceding *Canticas*. He has cut loose from the Earth and terrestrial Nature, which have furnished hitherto the material for his symbolic imagery. In his effort to transcend the finite world, has he not destroyed the very possibility of artistic expression? Not yet, though on the way thereto; he has an Art which is seeking to reach beyond Art; but just this reaching beyond Art is itself the new Art, that of Dante in the *Paradiso*.

We shall notice that in the celestial world he gives a physical environment imaging the character of the souls in the Sphere where they are placed. The same thing we observed in the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*; but in the *Paradiso* the part performed by the landscape is very slight; here are no rocks, trees, animals, valleys, moun-

tains. The symbolism, therefore, has to seize upon the cosmic elements of Nature, light, motion, sound; ethereal, yet known also to earth.

The chief elemental principle of the *Paradiso* is light, always significant of spirit, lying somewhere on the border between the material and non-material, revealing the limits of other bodies but refusing to show its own. Dante in many ways seeks to vary light, and to make it cast diverse symbolic suggestions. The Spheres are illuminated, and the souls are flames, and the spectacular symbols might almost be called celestial fire-works. A great play of light through the *Paradiso* furnishes a common uniting element; Hell has darkness mainly, or fiery destruction; Purgatory has the changes between light and darkness, day and night. One of the continued efforts of Dante is to get used to the ceaseless and increasing radiance of Heaven and of Beatrice.

The next important element in the *Paradiso* is motion. The heavenly Spheres move, the souls in them move in variety of ways, Dante himself moves, ascending from Sphere to Sphere, and giving the idea of development of the spirit. Many kinds of motion there are, often deeply suggestive; for motion in itself is the first mastery over the pure externality of Space, and hints the mover. Dante, after Aristotle,



carries motion up into the conception of divinity ; God is the Mover, not moved.

The combination of light and motion is found everywhere in the Paradiso, and gives it often a gorgeous phantasmagoric appearance. Especially is this the case with what we shall call the spectacular symbols of the last seven Spheres. The souls are shapes of flame or scintillations, these shapes move together and form some figure, a wheel, a cross, a ladder, and finally a rose, which figure becomes a kind of armorial sign of the Sphere. This sign continually moves within itself and also undergoes transformation at times ; light and motion make it a grand celestial spectacle imprinted on a planet and hung up in the skies. The Moon, Mercury and Venus, composing the first Triad, have no signs of this sort, for reasons which will be given hereafter.

Then there is another element present in these Spheres, sound, which takes the form of music, long ago hinted in the music of the Spheres. These souls have voices which naturally turn to song, uttering the harmony of the celestial realm. Dante is quite as much overcome by the sound as by the light, both of which are transfigured into supernatural wonders for the hearing and the vision. In Purgatory already we heard strains of heavenly music sung by angels down to the purified man, as he transcended his mortal sin.

In such an environment, ideal yet elemental, does the paradisaical journey take place. Light, motion, music are matter as it were spiritualized, matter in the process of becoming non-material, and thus transcending itself. Matter has a kind of aspiration to be a soul and develops in light, motion, and music a certain kinship with souls.

V. Such is, in general, the great edifice of the Paradiso, the external temple of Heaven, built of materials furnished by the total Cosmos, and extending into Space beyond Space. The Mythos, the Theology, the vast architectural Design, the etheralized Elements, light, motion, music, up to human speech, became organic in the structure, and make truly the cathedral of the Universe. But like a cathedral it is something fixed, formed, changeless even in its motion; also the souls in it seem to be bounded, confined to their one Sphere in eternal satisfaction.

Here the objection meets us that there is no development of the individual spirit in Dante's Paradiso; the soul lies chained forever in the limits of its character and deed. Within its Sphere there may be change, and perchance progress; but it appears unable to pass from Sphere to Sphere. There can be hardly a doubt that Dante conceived certain bounds to be laid upon the man by his life; the lawgiver can never become a theologian, Justinian can not enter the

Sphere of Thomas Aquinas. Not only life, but also birth, manifestly puts certain limits of talent, taste and character upon the human being; indeed birth individualizes the soul, and life unfolds the germ into reality. So each man has his Sphere determined by birth and life to all eternity. Otherwise he would not be a true individual.

Yet we must note the two exceptions to this fixity of the soul in a given Sphere. Each individual of the *Paradiso* is not only in his assigned place below, but is also above in the universal Heaven, the *Empyrean*, and there shares in the presence of God. So he is doubled, which is a very significant fact of the *Paradiso*. Each soul is not only an individual, but is also universal, has not only its particular Heaven but has all Heaven. It does not lose its individuality in God, is not absorbed, nor, on the other hand, is it merely particular, without participation in the Divine, as are the souls of the *Inferno*, in which there is the same appearance of fixity. Thus the limit of individuality is not a limit shutting out divinity, but is united with the same in Paradise.

The other exception is even more complete. This man Dante passes from Sphere to Sphere, sees them all in their essence, and talks with the souls in them. He is movement, the transformable, the limit-transcending, with the aid

of Beatrice. His celestial journey is an experience, needful, salutary, a great illumination of the spirit, and, we should say, a discipline. Not a moral discipline, however; that he experienced in Purgatory, when he was freed of the Seven Sins; nor is it the purging of his intellect from negation, since that was accomplished in Terrestrial Paradise, and was the preparation for ascending to Heaven. But there are grades of spiritual truth in the celestial world; the soul there rises from stage to stage, each requiring a more perfect spiritual insight, till at last comes the vision of God himself. So in this vast Order, so fixed, so abiding, there is the free, boundless spirit, unfolding through itself into an universal selfhood. Such is Dante in the *Paradiso*.

But he has a companion, a woman, whose function and character have always aroused a prodigious interest, and centered the attention of most readers. Beatrice is the wonderful riddle yet the wonderful revelation of the poet to posterity. She often suggests allegory, representing Heavenly Wisdom, Theology, Grace, Revelation, the Church; yet she is not merely an allegorical figure, she refuses to be defined by any such abstract designations; she is subtle as spirit itself, and slips out of all attempts to grasp her by fixed categories. Still she must be and can be comprehended, nay designated, but the term

must not seek to hold her fast in rigid limits, but show her just as the limit-mastering one; thus she can be this, that, and the other, and yet be herself.

What has been previously said of the whole *Paradiso* will illustrate Beatrice. Ten Spheres there are, marked off one against the other, bounded, individualized. Yet the tenth Sphere is itself and all the rest too, is indeed itself just in being all the rest, thus it is truly the universal spiritual Heaven. So Beatrice is Theology, illuminating Grace and what not, yet is herself besides, is herself just because she transcends all such fixed limitations. She is the inner subjective soul which bears within itself the image of all Paradise, and thus she can be Dante's guide from Sphere to Sphere, till the Empyrean.

This guidance is of varied import and goes out in many directions. She is the external conductor from place to place; then she is specially the theological interpreter to Dante, answering all sorts of knotty questions; hence she is often taken as the impersonation of Theology. There is a continual play of dialogue between her and Dante and the various souls who speak; whereby the poet has sought to throw some dramatic life into his *Paradiso*. But more important than her words is the play of features, always a very significant part of human communication in sunny Italy. Beatrice's smiles, Beatrice's eyes reach

Spheres (ten).	Angelic movers.	Spectac- ular symbol.	Persons present	Their char- acter.	Their localit.	Their theme. Theolog- ical, etc.
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## A. Finite.

## I. LOWER HEAVEN. First Triad.

(1) Moon.	Angels	None.	Piccarda. Constance.	Breakers of Vows.	Spots. Changes. Reflected Light.	Free-Will and Deter- minism.
(2) Mer- cury.	Arch- angels.	None.	Justinian. Romeo.	Active for Honor and Fame.	Velled by the Sun.	World's History in Rome's. The Cruci- fixion.
(3) Venus.	Princi- paliti's	None.	Carlo M. Cunizza. Folco. Rahab.	Sensuous Lovers.	In the Earth's Shadow.	Political. Diversity in Children.

## II. MIDDLE HEAVEN. Second Triad.

(4) Sun.	Powers	The Two Wheels. The Third One.	Aquinas. Bonaven- tura. 22 others.	Theologians	Pure light.	Trinity. Monastic Orders.
(5) Mars.	Virtues	Cross Crucifix.	Cacciaguida. 8 others.	Crusaders.	Red light.	Dante's Family. Florence.
(6) Jupiter	Domin- ions.	Letters. Eagle. It speaks	6 Princes in the Eagle's Eye.	Rulers. Justice.	White light. Tempered.	Damnation of the Heathen.

## III. UPPER HEAVEN. Third Triad.

(7) Saturn.	Thrones.	Ladder. Heaven- ward.	St. Peter Damian. St. Benedict.	Monks. Contempla- tion.	Highest of Planets. Slowest.	Predestina- tion. Corrupt Monasticism
(8) Fixed Stars.	Cheru- bim.	Triumph of Christ Vanishes with Mary.	Disciples: Peter, James and John. Adam.	Dante exam- ined by the Three Disciples.	Many Stars. Heaven in- dividualized	The Three Celestial Virtues.
(9) Pri- mum Mobile	Sera- phim.	Point and Nine Halos.	The Angelic Hierarchy.	Movers of the Spheres.	Pure Motion.	Angelology. Creation and Meaning of Angels.

## B. Infinite.

## IV. TOTAL HEAVEN. The One and the All.

(10) Empy- rean.	All the Angels	River. Lake of Light. The White Rose.	All the souls of Paradise.	Harmony of the Human with the Divine.	Outside of Space and Time.	Vision of the Triune God.
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Dante's soul, while her words appeal more to his intellect. When she smiles on him, or catches him up in the glance of her eyes, he mounts, he passes from a lower Sphere to a higher. Once indeed she stops smiling, lest his mortal body be consumed in the splendor thereof. So the twain proceed on their journey, indulging in a kind of celestial Italian pantomime, amid a marvelous display of celestial Italian fire-works, veritably a spectacular phantasmagory of the most daring kind up in Heaven, yet chastened by a spirit of deep reverence and faith, and very much tempered down in places by long intervening theological discussions.

In the preceding table the design is to give a survey of the structure and contents of the *Paradiso*. But this table represents only the one side, which we may call the objective; the other side is the subjective, represented by Dante and Beatrice, who are passing through the vast organism, beholding, explaining, appropriating it, that it become the spirit's own edifice, the celestial dwelling-place thereof. And the poet evidently intends that the reader should follow and not stop till he has taken possession of this lofty pile of heavenly architecture and transfigured it into the very temple of his own soul.

*Canto First.* The matter now in hand is the transition from Earth to Heaven, or from the Terrestrial to the Celestial Paradise; we may call it the passage from the finite to the infinite. Great is the difficulty: physically it is not easy to mount upward against gravitation; spiritually it is not easy to rise above the limited into the limit-transcending; artistically it is not easy to express in language the inexpressible. Still all three things must be done by man, specially by Dante now in the present Cantica — the Paradiso.

This first Canto falls into two portions: the introduction, or, as it is designated by Dante in the epistle to Can Grande, the prologue, which belongs to the whole Paradiso; the second portion is the transformation of Dante, now demanded within by his new spirit, and without by his end, which is the vision of God.

I. The introduction (42 lines) gives three thoughts, which perhaps may be best connected by looking at them as Hebrew, Greek and Christian ideas upon the subject before us.

1. The thought of God lies in the first line, "of Him who moves all things" — *Deus est movens non motum* (Aquinas). Then too He "penetrates the Universe," a conception often repeated by the Psalmist and the Prophets. Moreover "He shines in one part more and in another less." That is, there is a Divine Order seen in the gra-



dations of being, reflected also in the various Spheres of this Paradiso.

Such is in brief the God-thought, first and last of the Paradiso. It belongs to all peoples; the conception of deity as "the mover and not the moved" is found in Aristotle, but the book which has fashioned the idea of God for Dante and the whole Occident is the Hebrew Bible. "In the Heaven which holds most of His light was I," and beheld Him, face to face. The poet has seen the Infinite, truly the Ineffable, which no one "who descends from up there has either the knowledge or the power to re-tell." Still it has to be re-told, else the Paradiso and indeed all great poetry were impossible.

2. At this point Apollo is invoked, the Greek divinity of light; very different from the Hebrew divinity of light just mentioned. For the Hellenic God limitizes himself, he puts on finite shape, and appears; thus he can be uttered, in fact utters himself. The Greek light is not the infinite one, raying through the Universe beyond all bounds, but it defines, fixes, manifests objects, and also itself. With the Greek world Art is possible, or the expression of the Divine in finite forms. With Apollo's aid the Christian poet is to "make manifest the image of the blessed realm stamped within my head." The allusion to Marsyas, so dubious to critics, implies the same thought, for the God

“did draw the Satyr forth from the sheath of his limbs,” and show him to light as he really was.

Thus Dante regards his poetic utterance as a heathen inspiration, whereas the content is Christian and cannot be adequately told. The artistic form is finite, the subject-matter is infinite; still they both must be married and live together. The Christian poem cannot do without the great Heathen contribution to the world's culture. Note that there is an invocation of the Muses at the beginning of the *Purgatorio*, and Virgil is declared to be the great literary model at the beginning of the *Inferno*. What a full recognition on the part of the poet of the source of his literary form, though it be non-Christian!

Just for this reason, Dante has been often and severely taken to task by his fellow-religionists. These classical allusions and invocations of Heathen Gods are declared to be sadly out of place in a Christian poem, sometimes they are denounced as blasphemous. But the universal poet maintains his universality; his instinct is truly human and gives to every people their due, though at times his theology gets narrow and exclusive. Without the Greek world this poem could not have been, indeed Christianity could not have been.

Still there is a great struggle here between the two elements, the Greek and the Christian.

This struggle has its image in the opposition between meaning and form, the unspeakable and the spoken, the infinite and the finite. The meaning transcends literary utterance, which has, notwithstanding, to utter the same; which dualism lies in all Romantic art, and culminates in this *Paradiso* of Dante, the greatest and most desperate attempt in all literature to express the inexpressible.

3. The play of Dante's subtle and far-fetching fancy is seen in the allusion to the Sun, when it is at that point "which joins four circles with three crosses." The equator, the ecliptic, and the equinoctial colure intersect at the spring equinox about sunrise with the horizon, which is the fourth circle; the three crosses are made by the intersection of the other circles with it. "The lamp of the world," the Sun, rises just at that point of intersection when the poem opens; at which point the celestial luminary "comes forth conjoined with better course and better star" for impressing "the mundane wax" of humanity. Note the touch of astrological belief, with which the poet will hereafter have a struggle.

Now in this fanciful passage three thoughts are intricately wound together, which must be unwound and laid apart by the student who is following Dante through all the sinuosities of his genius. First, the poet therein locates himself in time and place, looking at Earth, Sun and

Stars (in the zodiac), and making the totality of the physical universe into his clock. Secondly, the four circles and the three crosses suggest the four Heathen and the three Christian virtues, of which classification Dante makes so much use. Thirdly, the seven virtues now unite and intersect at one point, through which passes "the lamp of the world," the light embracing and illumining them all. Herein is suggested the union and harmony of the Heathen and Christian worlds, such as already has been often seen in the *Divine Comedy*.

At this point the introduction comes to an end, since Beatrice now appears gazing on the Sun, and Dante's preparation for the celestial journey begins. But we have had three ideas set forth which lay down the great lines of the poem: the idea of God, the Infinite, essentially Hebrew yet with Greek philosophic tinges; then the idea of the Infinite taking on form, and thus finitizing and uttering itself, which is the special great Greek contribution; finally a hint of the Christian idea which is next to unfold itself fully.

II. Dante and Beatrice are now taken up at the point where we saw them at the end of the Purgatorio. The poet has circled half of the Mountain from east to west, then he has moved eastward through the Terrestrial Paradise to the stream of Eunoe. Hence Beatrice turns northward to gaze at the Sun on her left, and Dante

follows her example, fixing "the eyes on the Sun beyond our wont." Dante can now look on the Source of Light, being led hereto by his new guide Beatrice, when of a sudden "day seemed added to day" as if "the Heavens were adorned with another Sun." Surely a great increase of illumination.

Next we are to mark the internal change in Dante, who now removes his eyes from above and fixes them on Beatrice, when "I became in her aspect such within myself as Glaucus," who, in the old Greek legend, was transformed into a sea-god on tasting a certain herb. "Transhumanized" the poet calls it, divinized, the very characteristic of the *Paradiso*, in contrast to the *Inferno* in which man is diabolized. That is, he now transcends his human limitations, he is transfigured out of finitude, he begins to realize his infinite nature, which is just the essence of Beatrice. Observe that he has reached this great new experience by contemplating her, till he is transformed into her spiritual semblance. She, however, keeps looking "at the eternal wheels," the celestial light and order above, which she mediates for Dante in his present condition.

What now happens? He is rising through the Heavens, flying toward the *Empyrean*, toward God, "upborne by thy light." Still he is unconscious of the fact; his new state is instinctive, a desire, not a knowledge; a principle of soul not

yet risen into intellect. A mere longing for the perfection of the Divine causes the motion upward, away from the Earth, out of finitude. But this unconscious desire is itself inadequate, and must be elevated into a self-conscious knowing. *Deus movet sicut desideratum et intellectum* (Aquinas). Soon Dante runs upon his limit of ignorance, and seeks to remove the same through Beatrice, who is the limit-remover.

He notices a change in his environment; the illumination has become a great lake of sunflames, and a wonderful harmony begins to sound through the spheres; the celestial world is revealed in light and music. What is the cause thereof? Beatrice answers: "Thou makest thyself gross with false imagining; thou art not on the Earth as thou deemest;" still earthy, limited finite in his thought, not limit-transcending, not universal, he is unable to think the Infinite though he desires it above all things, and is really "returning to his proper home" swifter than any thunderbolt. Note that Dante conceives of this flight heavenward as a return; the man is going back whence he came. So also in a passage of the *Convito* (IV. 28.) Dante says: "The noble soul returns to God as to the harbor from which it set out when it entered into the sea of this life." Freed from the Earth, the wandering spirit flies homeward to the Father's mansion, which is truly the great Return.

The pith of Beatrice's answer lies in the fact, that when the man rises out of the terrestrial into the celestial region, he sees the fresh floods of Divine Light and hears the new music of the Divine Order. But this ascent calls forth a new limit, which has to be removed. It is contained in the question: "How can I mount above these light bodies" (air and fire)? Why do I rise against gravitation? The answer of Beatrice gives a brief construction of the universe, of which we note the leading thoughts.

(1) God is the beginning, He images himself in the creation. "All things whatsoever have an order among themselves, and this is form, which makes the universe like to God," being in his semblance, "wherein the lofty creatures (men and angels) behold the trace of Eternal Goodness, which is End, whereunto the aforesaid norm (order) has been made." The Divine Order, formed in the likeness of God, has its end in Him. (2) The lower grades of creation more or less removed from Him, manifest instinct, tendency, desire, all of which move towards Him, their End; even the higher orders which are gifted with intellect and love have the same direction. "And now thither, as to a place appointed," we are speeding like an arrow shot from a bow. Such is the reason of our mounting upward. *Omnia appetunt Deum ut finem* (Aquinas). (3) But there is the opposite

tendency, the counter movement or alienation from the Divine; in nature, for example, lighting sometimes descends earthward and not upward; chiefly, however, free-will in man can go contrary to the return and defy the world-order.

So Dante rises aloft against the law of gravitation, in obedience to another law, which is spiritual, and which is henceforth to hold good for the celestial flight. Once on the Earth and in it he followed gravitation down to its very center and found Satan. Passing that last point of Hell, he has climbed the purgatorial Mountain, and is now soaring above it through the fire-circle next to the Moon, having been purged of all earthly tendencies and being borne aloft by the pure love of the Good, which the Creator has put into every creature. "Thou oughtest no more to wonder at thy ascent than at a stream running down a mountain."

The conception is the flight of the whole Universe toward God as End, from the highest beings to the lowest. There is in all this a touch of Oriental absorption; man begins to lose consciousness, "our intellect goes down so deep in its desire (which is God) that memory cannot get back." Individuality has no longer such stress here as in the Purgatorio; Dante shows now a leaning toward a Christianized Pantheism. It is generally held that in his earlier



period he was tinctured with the doctrine of Averrhoes, an Arabian Pantheistic thinker sprung from Aristotle, and denying immortality. A touch of the former Oriental tendency seems now to be reborn in him, but the child has had a Christian baptism. Still, let us wait, the pendulum will oscillate back again.

It is evident that Dante has recorded in this Canto a great personal experience. He first gazes at the Sun, imitating Beatrice in a sort of external way; then he contemplates her, when she becomes internal, she is within him, and he is "transhumanized." Wonderful Beatrice! What can she be? Not exactly Divine Wisdom, or Divine Grace; not Theology or Revelation; none of these she is, yet possibly all of them. Not a fixed category or dogma; nothing marked off and limited, but rather the limit-transcending spirit, which reveals infinitude itself, and which is the principle of all rise and growth out of ignorance, weakness, sin, toward perfection.

Beatrice, accordingly, must be seen as two-fold, she is within Dante and outside of him too, she is the principle of the man's spirit and of the world's spirit; she is both subjective and objective, and therein truly one and universal. Before Dante can see her outside of himself, he must get her within himself, which is verily his transfiguration herein before described. Likewise the reader is to behold as the final fruit

of his Dantean study this twofoldness of the Divine, its innerness in the man and its outer-ness in the world. Indeed it is the fundamental insight into all great poetry. Old Homer has the principle, which shows the God within and the God without; both must co-operate before the divine deed can be done by the man. Aristotle has given the same idea very pithily in an abstract form: *Ἡ γνῶσις τοῦ ὁμοίου τῷ ὁμοίῳ*. Thomas Aquinas expresses the same thought, though by no means so adequately and concisely as the Greek philosopher: *Requiritur ad cognoscendum ut similitudo rei cognitæ sit in cognoscente quasi quædam forma ipsius*. In Scripture the man must have the Divine born within him in a new birth ere he can see the Kingdom of Heaven. In line 106 of the present Canto, "the lofty created beings behold the trace" of God in the Divine Order of the World through the God within themselves, in the likeness of whom they have been made.

Beatrice has entered into the soul of Dante, whereby he has become transformed, and he rises upward in swift aspiration for the Empyrean. But mere aspiration is not enough, though much; it must be transformed into knowledge, wherein there is still much work for Beatrice and Dante. *Deus movet sicut desideratum et intellectum* — the *desideratum* has been reached, but the *intellectum* is yet to be attained.

Such is, in general, the transition from Purgatory to Paradise; the sensuous world is etherealized into a realm of light, music, motion, while the terrestrial landscape vanishes out of view. Such, too, is the inner transition of the poet, being "transhumanized" by looking into Beatrice's eyes, and made ready for his celestial journey, of which the first landing-place is now to be described.

#### LOWER HEAVEN.

The first Triad—the Moon, Mercury and Venus—are distinctly marked off by the poet and classed together. Lower Heaven we call it, in relation to the rest, being nearer to the Earth and partaking of it more than the other Heavens. These three Spheres, in the first place, manifest a defect of nature; they have not perfect light; the Moon shines by reflected rays, Mercury is almost lost in the brilliancy of the Sun, Venus has a shadow of the Earth thrown into its Sphere from the same source, as Dante supposes.

In harmony with this defective environment of nature, the souls of this Heaven are imperfect, being deficient in their Wills. Those in the Moon break their vows through some weakness of volition; those in Mercury do the good not for its own sake, but through personal motives, such as glory and honor; those in Venus have yielded quite too much to carnal delights, in what they

have done of excellence. Their Wills are defective through being determined by three inadequate loves — love of life, love of fame, love of love, the latter being of the sensuous sort. All of these motives are insufficient, are not universal; they are seen to be individual, even when the outcome is a good action.

Hence these souls have all a tinge of individualism; they have not arrived at true individuality, which has its universal self as content. Selfishness, probably not as a sin but as a defect, as a limit in character, is still seen in the *Paradiso*, in spite of the vigorous purgatorial discipline for it down on the Mount of Purification. Thus it is that they have to be placed here in Lower Heaven; they are individualized as just such people. Still, they are also in the Empyrean or the Universal Heaven above, which is likewise everywhere.

In contrast with the other and higher Triads, this fact of individualism is strikingly marked by the poet. All the Spheres above these three lower ones show the spirits associated together, so that they make a new shape wholly distinct from the individuals composing the same. This shape or figure is the Wheel in the Sun, the Cross in Mars, the Eagle in Jupiter, and so on, and is produced by the co-operation of the souls in the given Sphere. It is what we have called the spectacular symbol of that part of *Paradise*. Now there is no such symbol found in the three

Spheres of Lower Heaven; each individual moves and speaks for himself; he has not risen out of the material element of his planet into spiritual association which produces the above symbol, he is still too individualistic.

Hence it comes that this first Triad is less spectacular, has less phantasmagoric show and fewer wonderful appearances produced by light and motion, than the rest of the Paradiso. The symbols above mentioned are the source of many marvelous displays of heavenly scenery and apocalyptic sights, which are proportionately wanting in the three lower Spheres; in the place thereof we find theological discussion which is more abundant in Lower Heaven than elsewhere; perhaps that is one reason why it is lower, as it certainly is less imaginative and poetical. I have often to think that these early Cantos of the Paradiso break most readers down by the weight of Theology, so that they never behold the wondrous visions of the higher Spheres.

Theological discussion, accordingly, is here to have its special place in the Paradiso, though we shall often meet it elsewhere in the present *Cantica*. And the particular problem of Theology in Lower Heaven must be the Freedom of the Will, since all these souls have some defect of the Will, which is, therefore, not truly free. The first question, that which rises in the Moon, is: Can human volition be determined from without, or

is it absolutely self-determined? From which is derived the corollary: Is man responsible or not?

The second question, that which comes up in Mercury, goes back to the beginning, to Adam's fall, that is, to the very origin of sin in the free-will of a man created perfectly good by God himself. Other cases in this Heaven bring up the relation of man's free-will to the Providential Order. Entangled in theological mazes do these questions sometimes become, seeking to interpret the Hebrew Sin-Mythus, yet never quite able to get free of a mythical substrate. But through all the entanglements one fact never fails to come out clear: Dante's soul is loyal to freedom.

Another distinction we may note: the present Triad has no direct statement of the Trinity, and only some passing allusions to the same, whereas in the later Triads it is the grand central fact, which culminates in the vision of it in the Empyrean.

We may also mark the limits of the present Triad in the *Cantica*, which are definite, making perchance a little poem by itself. It runs through eight Cantos, from the second to the tenth, when the Sphere of the Sun breaks upon reader, and a new Triad begins, whereof later.

**THE MOON.** This is the first Sphere or landing-place in the poet's celestial journey. At the start we should note how he transforms the physical

nature of the Moon into a symbol, which reflects the character of the souls who find here their abode.

The lunar substance appears hard and vitreous, fixing the spirit in rigid limits, yet Dante with Beatrice enters it without material resistance. It is also called the "everlasting pearl." On the other hand, it waxes and wanes, seems changeable, capricious. Thus it indicates the two sides of the imperfect Will, which can be very stubborn and very fickle in the same person. Finally, the Moon shines by reflected light, gets its main determination from without and not from itself. Thus it is made into a symbol of the soul here, which also has spots of darkness like it; note too, these spots come from a spiritual, and not from a physical cause, according to Dante.

The spirits still have faces though these be very faint, looking like "mirrored semblances;" reflections they are indeed, not self-centered, being influenced to break their vows by external force of some kind.

*Canto Second.* Not an easy Canto by any means; rather the hardest to read of any part of the *Divine Comedy*. And we shall have to confess that the fault lies with Dante himself; here he quite lacks luminous order and luminous thought; moreover there is something forced and sophisticated in his reasoning. An obscuration of the Dantean sun let us deem it; yet worthy of being

studied, as are all eclipses, for the new aspect it gives of the great poetic luminary.

The Canto opens with a very emphatic warning to the listener or reader. "Turn about and look at your shores," like careful navigators; "do not cast yourselves into the open sea" which now spreads out illimitable, "for perchance losing me ye will stay lost." Surely an honest admonition, applicable to the whole *Paradiso*, and specially to this Canto. An ocean never before sailed through, the poet claims, with some degree of self-appreciation, this ocean being the future condition of the Christian Blessed. Still he cannot do without the Heathen Gods, form-givers of the Infinite, who are here trebly invoked — Minerva, Apollo, and the Muses. Nor can he do without Heathen Fable, by way of illustration; so we now catch a passing glimpse of the old Argonauts in that wonderful Hellenic voyage, not to Heaven for Blessedness but to an earthly land for the Golden Fleece. Such is veritably the difference between Hellas and Christendom; but it is manifest that there is going to be woven into the Christian's Paradise many a bright strand of Greek Heathendom.

We now approach the main burden of the Canto, which is heavy enough. But we shall divide it into three leading portions, and subdivide these again, and so try to bring the whole



to the baffled understanding piecemeal. The details and chiefly the things not mentioned but taken for granted by the poet, constitute the main difficulty. The general drift, however, is sufficiently plain and may be stated at the start. Beatrice is seeking to free Dante's mind from the idea of physical causation for the appearances of heavenly bodies. Paradise is not of material origin; the formal (non-material) principle is what must be sought for and found.

I. The first general declaration here is that the seeking for God is the cause of all motion in man and in the universe, the cause of Dante's flight upward and of the swiftness of the Heavens above. "The con-create (created with all creation) and eternal thirst for the God-formed realm did bear us on;" moreover we were "swift as ye behold the Heavens swift." Such is the Final Cause, not only of heavenly motion, but of all heavenly manifestations, which appear as physical.

Suddenly Dante finds himself in the Moon, "the everlasting pearl;" but how? Can one material body "tolerate another?" No direct explanation is given, but an analogy; "as water receives a ray of light," or "as the sun strikes a diamond," so Dante enters the lunar pearl. Such are the physical examples; then a hyper-physical example is hinted in "that essence in which is seen how our nature and God were made

one." The union of Dante with the Moon is something of the sort, a miraculous, supernatural matter which we now must "hold by faith," and which is not "demonstrated," but which we shall see hereafter immediately, and it "shall be known of itself." So much for this first passage whose details we may not always have interpreted aright, but the general purport is manifestly thus: Dante, much given to the investigation of nature, has to be first purified of the tendency which Natural Science generates, and must be brought to see supernatural causation, ere he can know the celestial world. Such is Beatrice's first lesson, now to be followed by a second.

II. This pertains directly to the spots on the Moon—what produces them? Have they a physical cause? No must be the answer, and the argument turns upon justifying such answer. And here Beatrice takes occasion to warn her pupil that there is a domain "where the key of sense unlocks not," and, furthermore, she utters the pregnant apothegm: "Behind the senses reason has the wings clipped." Mere ratiocination from sensuous facts is inadequate to explain this celestial world; little use for your inductive syllogism here in Heaven, says Beatrice; Reason, the divine faculty, must fly up in advance of and not behind the senses. With which admonition she proceeds to state three cases which militate against any physical explanation of "the dark signs" on the Moon.

(1) The first is the case of the Fixed Stars, the Eighth Sphere, which has many lights qualitatively and quantitatively diverse. But if diversity can be explained by a physical cause, such as the density and rarity of matter, in the case of the Moon, the same cause can be applied to explain the diversity of the Fixed Stars. But their diversity (*virtù diverse*) is the result of "formal principles," of many such principles, and not one alone, namely density and rarity, which is, after all, material. *Formæ quæ sunt in materia venerunt a formis quæ sunt sine materia* (Aquinas). Dante seems to imply, though he does not say so, that the material argument for the Moon's marks leads to a destruction of the Celestial Movers, the Angels who preside over and diversify the Fixed Stars. The Heavenly Hierarchy, which was the belief of the Church, as well as the foundation of the Paradiso, would thus go to pieces. Hence the suppressed inference should be given; it is unbelief to assign a physical cause to the Moon's spots.

From this argument, more ecclesiastical than anything else, the poet passes to the physical phase of his reasoning.

(2) Here are two suppositions. The first is, if the body of the Moon be so rare and thin as to become transparent in portions, allowing ordinary light to pass through them, then the sun in an eclipse will shine through these por-

tions, thus indicating their rarity. But no such thing takes place. Hence the body of the Moon has not that thinness and thickness of matter, or rarity and density, which produce the marks.

(3) The second supposition is, not the transparency of the body of the Moon, but the reflection of light from its surface. "If this rarity extend not through and through the lunar matter, then the light will be turned back, as from the glass which hides lead behind itself," and "thou wilt affirm that the ray shows itself less bright from being reflected further back" than other rays reflected from the denser portions. Thus through reflection the density and rarity of the Moon cause the dark spots and also the light places.

This affirmation Dante proceeds to refute by an experiment with mirrors, showing that the brightness of an object is not diminished "by being reflected further back," but only its size is lessened.

Thus through physical observation we are to infer that a physical cause cannot account for the lunar spots. To be sure only one such physical cause is here adduced, that of density and rarity. Dante once held this opinion, so he is in the present passage refuting his former self. In the *Convito* II. 14, he speaks of the "shadow in it (the Moon), which is nothing but the rarity of its body, in which the rays of the Sun cannot ter-

minate and be reflected, as in the other parts." Too much given to the methods of Natural Science he once was, to get to Heaven; so he tacitly recants and turns from physical to supernatural causation, which is next to be set forth in some fullness.

III. The preceding argument was negative, it showed what was not the cause of the lunar spots, though sometimes supposed to be. Now the poet proceeds to unfold what is the true cause; this goes up to the angelic Movers, located in the Ninth Sphere, but determining "the motion and the virtue" of all the lower Spheres. Hence, in order to give this cause adequately, he has to call before the reader's mind the entire celestial organization, as it was received in his time. (See the tabular view in our Introduction, p. 410).

"Within the Heaven of divine peace," which is the tenth, "revolves a body in whose virtue lies the being of all that is contained within it." This is the Ninth Sphere, that of the *Primum Mobile*, the Sphere of the angelic Hierarchy or nine Orders of Angels, who are the Movers above mentioned. One of these Orders, that of the Angels proper, embraces the Movers of the Moon, and from them come the spots as well as the motion and the character of the lunar body. These are the so-called "formal principles," intelligences, determiners of the celestial bodies.

This subject of the Angelic Hierarchy will be fully elaborated when the celestial journey reaches the *Primum Mobile*, or Ninth Sphere. But before we come to that part of the *Paradiso*, a general idea of the Ninth Sphere and its workings is necessary. It is inconceivably swift, its velocity is caused by its eagerness to fly to the Sphere beyond, which is the *Empyrean*, that Sphere where God is. This motion it imparts to the lower Spheres, which therefore are also moved by the desire to attain unto the Divine.

Thus the *Primum Mobile* receives an influence from above and transmits it below; it mediates the invisible *Empyrean* with the visible Spheres, which still have material body. This influence is yet further individualized, according to the different Spheres, into the nine Orders of the "Blessed Movers," who produce "the motion and the virtue of the Holy Circles" (the Nine Spheres). Moreover these different angelic virtues unite with the matter of the planets, "make various alloy with the body which they quicken." Hence the diversity of the light in the Heavenly Bodies; hence too the source of the dark spots on the Moon. The cause is not a physical one, but spiritual, angelic, springing ultimately from the Movers, the angelic principle. Such is Dante's science of Heavenly Physics, not derived from observation and induction, but really a *Mythus* of the skies.

This Mythus, of course, is a thought clothing itself in the appearances of cosmical nature. The thought is that of the future of the Blessed, whose home is in the skies, which home must be fitted up according to the deed on Earth. So we shall behold Sun, Moon and Stars as the abodes of the Good after death, who are put into an environment which reflects each soul.

The origin of this Mythus reaches far back into the history of primitive peoples. Some construction of the Happy Home beyond lies in the faith in immortality. This form of the Mythus in Dante can be traced back to the fifth century of the Christian Era, though it has been falsely assigned to Dionysius the Areopagite, contemporary with the Apostles. From a famous book (*De Celesti Hierarchia*) it passed into the belief of the church, and was finally taken up and fully organized and theologically grounded by Thomas Aquinas. From him it has been recast by Dante and poetized into a celestial journey.

This Celestial Mythus is at bottom an attempt to embody a system of thought, to construe the Universe. The first principle is the Empyrean, Rest, God, the absolute One; the second, Primum Mobile, introduces the opposite, absolute motion, inconceivably swift, which is, therefore, the complete negation of that Rest above. The third is the Fixed Stars, a principle of fixity, opposite to the previous motion, yet these Stars move also,

each fast in the grand circle, and thus in a manner they combine rest and motion. The fourth is the Planets, the wanderers of the skies; the principle of stellar fixity is broken up and each body goes its own way. So we note that into the primordial One are successively introduced various differentiations, which make the character or virtue of the different Circles. This virtue is individualized in a governing Mover, the active spirit of the realm, who is supposed to give to the same its special property and appearance. This is the formal principle of individuation. So these spots are an individual characteristic of the Moon and spring from a non-material source, its Mover.

In general Dante implies that the phenomena of the Heavens are not to be explained by any terrestrial principle of matter. The Infinite is not to be shown by the Finite. Moreover, another faculty besides induction is needed to behold them in their essence. Even language is inadequate to express them. The earthly limits of Speech and of Science must be transcended in reading this Paradiso. No wonder that he gives a note of warning at the beginning of the present Canto, for his demands upon his reader are certainly heavy.

*Canto Third.* Again the stream of poetry starts to flowing, and language becomes as pure and transparent as the substance of the Moon herein



described. This is like crystal, yet Dante enters it without difficulty, inasmuch it is non-material and will "tolerate another body." The previous Canto sought to set aside the purely physical conception of this lunar realm, which is really spiritual, and thus does not exclude like matter, but shares itself unto others, like spirit.

I. Here again we observe that principle so often noted before in Dante. The environment reflects the soul placed within it. That soul is one of the Blessed, hence it inhabits a sphere of light and participation. The light of the Moon, however, is not its own, still it shows itself just in that foreign light. Moreover the Moon has changes, waxing and waning, by no means steady to one shape or principle. Then, too, in the period of its greatest brightness it has the dark spots across its disc, as already discussed and explained.

II. In this vitreous transparent material of the Moon, which, however, offers no obstruction, Dante beholds the outlines of faces, which at first he mistakes for countenances reflected from a mirror, and turns around to see the actual people. But the faces are the actual people, though appearing like mere reflections of persons. Beatrice has to set Dante aright, who has taken substance for shadow in this lunar realm. She tells him also that these souls have been "relegated here for failure of a vow."

It is manifest that the element wanting in the present case is will, self-determination, which constitutes the life-blood of the individual, and without which he is indeed pale, shadowy, merely a reflection of some stronger energy. Those who take vows and break them under compulsion, that is, through some outward force, to which they yield, are lunar characters, imaging the more powerful will. Surely their volition is not complete, being limited by some fear, possibly the threat of death, which blanches their individuality and makes their faces eternally pallid and uncertain as here. Still, even in the present case we must make a saving distinction; the will may surrender outwardly, but the inner will can remain secretly faithful to the vow, and thus reflect faintly the divine light from a shifting imperfect moon-face. Also the crystalline fixity may hint the external constraint in which the soul is held.

Perhaps one step further the thought may be carried, though hardly conscious to Dante. The person who takes a vow, particularly a monastic vow, which binds the soul to God by an external rite and order, has originally some defect of will, which has to be strengthened from the outside. The nun Piccarda reflected from the beginning her order rather than her own individual power of consecration. Many, in fact most people need such external help or constraint, but they are not the completely self-determined, not the

perfect. Hence when the external tie is broken, the weakness is made manifest. Thus the Heaven of the Moon is the lowest, quite in adaptation to this kind of defective saintship.

III. At once another question arises: "Tell me, you who are here happy, do you desire a higher place?" Is there no progress in this Paradiso? Has all aspiration for the more perfect conditions come to an end? Truly the great question of the present Cantica; it will worry the poet and haunt the reader all the way through to the end, and still remain. Shall we banish the idea of development from Heaven? Still further, what shall we do with Free-Will there?

For the present, we may listen to Piccarda's answer: "Brother, the virtue of charity quiets our will" — which certainly sounds a little like quietism. "Charity makes us will only that which we have and stills our thirst for aught beside." What is charity here? Love of God, acceptance of his will: "If we should desire to be in a higher place, our desires would be discordant with the will of Him who puts us here." Therefore no aspiration for what is above us (*più superne*). Blessedness is "to keep ourselves within the Divine Will, through which one will all our wills become one." And the whole is concentrated in that gem of holiness:

*In la sua voluntade è nostra pace.*

In which line we feel the last breath of the individual passing into an eternal rest.

Upon these passages two observations can be made. The first is that throughout the *Paradiso* there is often felt a return to Oriental thought, a glint of Pantheism, a trace of absorption, very different from the strong assertion of the individual in the *Purgatorio*. Dante seems to have gone back in part to his early studies in Averrhoes tinged now of course very deeply with Christian Mysticism, also an Oriental inheritance. Then too we must take into account the period and the circumstances of Dante's life when he wrote the *Paradiso*. He was tired of action, which in his case had come to nought; he was worn out with his own free-will and began to re-act against it toward a kind of quiescence; a world-weariness came over him, a longing for repose in the Absolute Will, which might henceforth take its own way.

The second observation is, that we must not push too far the thought that Dante expresses only himself in these passages. Note that they suit specially *Piccarda*, who is a weak-willed good woman, who gives up in part her will to external force, and who therefore would be inclined to surrender it wholly to God. The character, accordingly, demands that the stress be laid upon resignation to the Divine Will; no striving is hers, no strong assertion of individu-

ality. Beautiful, very beautiful is this submission, and belongs just here ; mighty is will-power, but this is not its place.

In the story of Piccarda Donati one feels a personal touch. Gemma Donati, Dante's wife, belonged to the same family. Piccarda was violently taken by her brother Corso from the cloister and compelled to marry a man of his choice, not of hers, for she had chosen to " wake and to sleep with that spouse " who is the nun's bride-groom, Christ. A good deal of excitement in the family such a deed must have produced ; strong feeling for the sister, a suppressed indignation against the brother, as a man " more accustomed to ill than to good," we read in these lines, which pay a sweet sympathetic tribute to the wronged dead. Yet it notes her limit of character also ; after her talk ended she vanished out of sight in her lunar home, still singing *Ave Maria*, the angelic salutation to the Virgin Mary.

*Canto Fourth.* Piccarda has vanished, she cannot answer Dante's deeper questions ; he turns to Beatrice and finds her all light, which " his sight at first endured not." And yet another difficulty. Two doubts assail him, pulling him in two opposite directions, so that " I held my peace," each question paralyzing the other, like the famous ass of Buridan, which starved between two bundles of hay equally distant and equally enticing.

Beatrice, however, sees the situation, which "was depicted on my face." She, indeed, shows an important phase of her character in the present Canto. What lay out of Piccarda's range, must be referred to her. The two questions we shall look at in the poet's order.

I. Do the souls of men return to the stars after death, each soul to its own stellar home, according to the opinion of Plato in the *Timæus*? If so, then the soul does not return to God as its final goal and rest, and the vision of deity is not the end and attainment of the good. Heresy is such a doctrine, violating the fundamental faith of the Church, and utterly subversive of this Paradiso, which is to lead the spirit up through the heavenly bodies, beyond Sun, Moon and Stars, to the throne of Divinity itself. A crucial question, therefore, in which Dante is seen fighting for his poem. Let us scan carefully his answer.

All the Blessed, the lowest in Moon not less than the highest in the upper Spheres have their places in the Empyrean, in the presence of Deity. Thus they have oneness, yet also diversity in blessedness, which diversity is shown in the different Spheres. "They manifest themselves here, not because this circle is allotted to them, but to give a sign of the degree of their celestial nature." In this way the Sphere marks the limits of the individual. Dante goes on to defend

his poetic method. "Thus it behooves to speak to your mind, since only from an object of sense does it apprehend that which it afterwards makes worthy of intellect," or spirit, which is to grasp the universal meaning in the sensuous fact. "Hence the Scripture condescends to your faculties by attributing hands and feet to God, *but means something else.*" A symbol, then, according to Dante, is this whole celestial journey from Sphere to Sphere, wherein we are to see the universal in the particular.

As poet he must have sense-forms for his expression, yet these sense-forms are always to let the spirit shine through. He is to employ speech to declare the unspeakable, the finite to utter the infinite; hence comes the struggle everywhere observable in the *Paradiso* between meaning and expression, between content and form. Through the spoken word to rise out of the spoken word into the ineffable spirit is the grand celestial effort.

After constructing his heavenly edifice with so much pains, he says it is a mere sign or outer appearance; he smites the colossal architecture, and makes it vanish into spirit; it must be shown as the unreal, still it must be shown. Such is the soul of Romantic Art, struggling to set forth the Beyond in the Here, and to reach out for the Eternal in Time, whereby it is pushed to the very extreme of inner contradiction, which is just its utterance.

The thought of this doubleness is a product of the ages. "In my Father's House are many mansions," one House, one Father, but many special dwelling apartments, which must not destroy the unity of the World-Family. But the strongest example comes down from old Homer (*Odyssey*, Book XI.). The one Hercules, with bow and arrow, still engaged in finite pursuits, is in Hades, the realm of departed individuals, along with other Heroes. But the glorified Hercules, the universal one, sits with the happy Gods above, on Olympus, and is at rest. Only one such person is in Homer; in Dante the Greek thought is universalized and becomes Christian. So all good men are to go to Heaven and see God. This duplicity of the spirit is therefore furnished by Homer, but comes into its true heritage in Dante's *Paradiso*. Of its source the poet seems not to be conscious.

The idea of the starry abodes for the soul is also Greek and comes from Plato, as Dante fully recognizes. Still traces of the same idea go back to Pythagoras and the Orient. Dante takes the star to represent the limit of individuality—character, capacity for the good, and outer environment. Each person must be himself and none other, not even God, in Paradise. Still all persons must be one in deity, partake of him, and do his will. The great doctor or the humble peasant, priest or layman, each in his way must



reveal the Divine, and so become perfect, for in so far as each individual in his own sphere reflects the divine light is he perfect. Individuality gets its perfection by making itself the bearer of the universal ; and yet it is not to be swallowed up or absorbed in the All.

Just at this point we run upon the great purpose of Dante in the present scheme of the soul's doubleness. It was to rescue individuality from Oriental absorption. It was the struggle for individual immortality, which the Arabians, specially Averrhoes, had assailed and in part undermined in the intellect of Europe. The question turned on the interpretation of Aristotle's *De Anima*, which Thomas Aquinas vindicated for Christendom against the Arabian view. Piccarda's doctrine hovers dangerously near the evanishment of the soul into God. She is a lunar character, of little will ; to Dante's eyes her dim moon-face disappears in the lunar matter, in a kind of moon-shine. This Canto is manifestly intended as a sort of counter agency to the previous Canto ; through Beatrice the poet turns to rescue the individual drowning in the unlimited sea of being.

II. The second question is : How can the violence of others diminish my merit, if my virtuous will endures ? Is not such a course unjust in God ? Dante adds that this is not a question of heresy, as the preceding one is, inasmuch as the present question does not directly involve any

matter of faith — *hæresis constitit circa ea quæ fidei sunt* (Aquinas); on the contrary it is rather an "argument of faith and not of heretical depravity if divine justice appears unjust in the eyes of mortals." God sees the totality, man only a fragment thereof, hence man should believe, if he cannot know.

Still, in the present case, the human mind can reach the truth, and Dante gives the emphatic answer: "these souls were not excused" on account of violence done or threatened; they yielded, they betrayed in a degree their infinite nature; they should have died rather than surrender their conscience. The unconquerable Will which asserts the good against all external violence and takes Death rather than do the wrong, is the last foundation of the moral character of man. Hence those eternal examples, Heathen as well as Christian, "Mutius cruel to his hand," and "Lorenzo on the gridiron;" they vindicated the absolute inner self-determination of man against all external fear of death. Hence they are so lauded by Beatrice who beholds in them something akin to herself.

The trouble with Piccarda and with Constance was that they allowed an outer power, some terror perchance, to mingle with their will and stain its purity; hence they are in the Moon, changeable, vanishing, not firm in selfhood. Then follows the summation in one of those incomparable Dan-

tean sentences, whose truth reaches the highest human excellence and whose grandeur is simplicity itself:

*Voglia assoluta non consente al danno:*

which in the culmination of the ethical greatness of man. Yet we must not forget that the same height was touched by the Heathen Philosopher, from whom Dante derived directly or indirectly his thought. "Some things are not to be compelled, but the suffering one must die (*αποθαιετέον*) rather than do them" (Aristotle, *Ethics*, III. 31).

In the discussion of the first doubt of the present Canto, Dante rescues individuality from absorption into the Divine; but in the second case, he asserts the self-determination of the individual will in its highest potency. Such seems especially here the function of Beatrice in contrast with that of Piccarda.

In fact this is just the dualism in Dante's soul when he wrote the Paradiso — sometimes leaning the one way, sometimes the other. If he never quite touches Pantheism, he certainly runs along the edge of Quietism, when he makes all desire and aspiration to be quenched in God.

But the same dualism is in Christian Theology, notably in Thomas Aquinas, who declares (S. T. II. 1. Quest. 19, Art. 10) that the will of man conforms itself to the divine will, because he wills

that which God wills him to will (*quia vult hoc quod Deus vult eum velle*). Mark the distinction: Man is harmonious with the Divine, not when he simply wills through himself the will of God, but wills the will of God through the will of God. Thus it is not self-determination which leads him to the divine fountain-head, but the external will of deity. Moreover the doctrine of contemplation seems to undo the will, in the realm of blessedness — *et voluntas tunc quiescit* (Aquinas). Thus intelligence is not absorbed or quieted, but the will is — half the man is gone.

III. Beatrice having thus asserted the “absolute will,” the infinite or self-limiting nature of man, Dante makes a memorable reply to her, which shows how he has understood her and her words.

First we may note the strange address to her: “Oh, lady-love of the Primal Lover!” God’s sweetheart is Beatrice, reflecting his love and his light, which indeed go together. Moreover she is a “Goddess,” herself embodying a divine power and illumination. This mighty laudation evidently has its ground in what Beatrice has just unfolded, which may be called in a general way the vindication of the individual.

Next Dante rehearses to his teacher what he has just learned — a very important passage. “I see well that our Intellect is never satisfied unless Truth illumines it, outside of which nothing

true exists." Clearly here are the two sides: subjective Intellect must attain objective Truth as its content, else there is no satisfaction. "And it can attain the same, otherwise each desire would be in vain." The two become one, and then there is repose, harmony. Such is the lesson which Dante has drawn from the previous words of Beatrice pertaining to Intellect and Truth.

Thirdly, the poet suggests the manner by which Intellect is to reach Truth. "For the sake of this (the attainment of Truth), Doubt shoots up like a branch at the foot of Truth." Doubt is the obstacle, is the limit which shuts off the vision of Truth; but this limit must be met by Intellect, which is just the limit-transcending faculty in man, that is, his infinite nature, which is to attain Truth—"it is nature which urges us from height to height to the highest." Thus Dante expresses his insight, which, however, he has been working with for a good while. Indeed he could not have climbed the purgatorial mountain without this power instinctively in him, could not have seen Beatrice without some vision of it, for it is just the divine-human, or infinite-finite, which she represents, limited but also limit-transcending. In his fundamental principle Dante has shown three forms—instinct in the purgatorial process, image in Beatrice, here it is a thought—all seeking to utter the same thing;

Man is one with God when he transcends his finite nature, and thus shows himself truly infinite.

Still Dante has by no means perfect insight, we can see it growing by the very nature of his doubts. Another question now comes up: Can a man make adequate satisfaction for a broken vow by other works? The subject involved is: Can a man through free-will give up free-will? If so, what is the consequence? This brings us to the very heart of the theme, which is freedom.

Note that the present is the third question on the subject. The answer to the first pertained to the return of the soul to the stars, and it sought to rescue the individual in Heaven, while preserving his unity with God; the second answer asserted the absolute freedom of the will against external violence; the third now is to assert the freedom of the will against itself, for it may give itself away, resign itself under certain conditions.

On hearing this question, "Beatrice looked at me with eyes so full of the sparkles of love, eyes so divine," that the poet could not stand it, and had to turn his glances away. The cause of this display is next to be given, as well as the answer to Dante's question.

*Canto Fifth.* Beatrice opens with telling the reason of her scintillations so dazzling. As we understand her, it is the flash of recognition, she

responds with the eyesight's flames to the growing spiritual vision manifested by her scholar. "It proceeds from my perfect vision, which, as it recognizes, moves its foot towards the recognized good." It goes out unto the good with love, which manifests itself in flashing and scintillating. "I well see how the eternal light shines in thy intellect, which light, when only seen, always kindles love." Dante has shown his insight in the previous Canto; Beatrice now recognizes the same still further in his present question, hence the response of love and recognition in the flames of her eyes. Truly the Divine is to recognize the Human, and the Human is to see and feel that recognition.

Herein, too, we may observe what this light of Beatrice and of Heaven means to Dante. The process is distinctly given: She sees in him the new illumination, then she is herself kindled with love, finally this light of love flashes upon the man with a sight-subduing radiance. Recognition is the whole of it, manifested in three stages—vision (*perfetto vedere*), love, light.

This Canto has two main portions which we shall consider separately.

I. Dante or rather Beatrice comes to treat of the change of service in the matter of a vow, which is a promise made to God, according to Aquinas: *Votum est promissio Deo facta de aliquo quod sit Deo acceptum*. Dante calls it a

contract between Man and God. *Tra Dio e l'uomo il patto*. Such a contract must depend on the will of the parties; hence the whole matter turns upon a consideration of the will. God made it and gave it to man; how does God regard this gift? Hear Beatrice:

“The greatest gift which God, through his bounty, made by creation, and that which is most conformed to His goodness, and that which He most highly prizes, was the liberty of will.” In the vow “this treasure is made a victim,” is sacrificed; in return for what? Is there any spiritual good greater, or even as great? For it is God’s “greatest gift,” and the one “most prized” by Him, and, moreover, it is most “like his goodness,” being just the universal good itself.

Clearly man is not to give up his free-will, unless in some completer form he regains it. How can this happen? Let us see. The free-will must have, as its highest subject-matter or content, only itself, for there is nothing else in the universe equal to it, being God’s greatest gift, nay, His own goodness or the image thereof. That is, free-will must will free-will, which is the universal good in its supreme potence, is God himself. In this form free-will cannot surrender itself.

But there are instances in which free-will has not itself as content, but something much inferior or indifferent in goodness, or it may be,



something positively bad. In such cases it can, indeed ought to renounce the lower content for the higher, for the universal one. Therefore, "if the vow is so made that God consents when thou consentest," and His consent means His own goodness as the matter of the vow, there can be no commutation, for there is no equivalent. As we understand the passage, this is what underlies the declaration of Aquinas: *In voto solemnizato per professionem religionis, non potest per ecclesiam dispensari*. The Church cannot grant a dispensation from the vow to be religious, or to be good, without self-destruction.

The infinite content of the free-will cannot, therefore, be exchanged or set aside for something else. But there are finite contents of free-will concerning which vows may be made, and such may be exchanged or set aside. Here we may apply Dante's words: "Two things come together to make the essence of this sacrifice: the one is that of which it is made (the matter), the other is the covenant (the infinite form of the free-will itself); this last is never canceled, *unless preserved*." This is the element which, being sacrificed, must be regained. But the other element, "the matter, can well be such that no failure results if it be exchanged with another matter." And here plays in the Church's authority.

Doubtless the poet has in mind the monastic vow, specially that of chastity. Can it be set aside? He does not seem to answer directly the question, yet he probably thinks that it cannot.

Dante finally inveighs against too great readiness to take vows in unimportant or hazardous matters. He instances the case of Jephthah as that of a foolish and wicked vow, to which he cites a Greek parallel in the sacrifice of Iphigenia, which he deems to have been made by Agamemnon in fulfillment of a vow,—a form of the legend known to Euripides but different from the more common version.

MERCURY. After the Moon comes the Sphere of Mercury, whose chief physical characteristic, as noted by Dante, is that "it veils itself from mortals with another's rays" (V. 129). It is almost lost in the rays of the Sun, lacks true individuality, lacks the complete Will. The symbolism is distinctly explained by the poet himself: "Here are the good spirits who have been active for the sake of honor and fame" (VI. 113). Another motive beside the love of the Good has overpowered them; that is, the Free-Will in their case has not willed Free-Will as universal content, but has dropped down to a purpose more or less individualistic. The special instances here given are good men — Justinian and Romeo — administering the secular world,

in which honor and fame are apt to be motives even for the good deed.

The subject-matter of this Sphere falls mainly into two discussions, the one political and the other theological, both of which however go back to Free-Will as their foundation. The political discussion is voiced by the Emperor Justinian, the great lawgiver, or codifier and systematizer of Roman laws, who gives an account of the origin of the Roman Empire, whose chief function from his point of view was the establishment of Justice, which is indeed the grand purpose of the State, the main secular institution. Now, Justice is to secure to man freedom, that is, Free-Will; and the State itself in its laws is the organization of Free-Will to maintain itself: Free-Will as realized in the institution of Justice underlies this political discussion.

But Justice with its secular Empire has a limit, which shows itself both in Thought and in the History of the World. A new principle rises, that of Repentance and Mercy, which principle, becoming active in the hearts of men, must be realized in a new institution, the Church. At this point the theological discussion enters and takes possession of the Sphere of Mercury. The matter still pertains to Free-Will. Who gave this wonderful power to man? God, who created Adam pure, but gave him the fatal gift, and he used it for his own Fall. Such was the first

man of all the world ; then came the second man, the Son of God, also endowed with Free-Will, but who used it to rescue the fallen brother. Thus the two world-men, Adam and Christ, colossal shapes of the Hebrew Sin-Mythus, rise up into Dante's poem and are specially considered in the present Sphere.

In the Moon the absolute Free-Will (*voglia assoluta*) of the individual is asserted, and with it human responsibility; in Mercury this Free-Will is looked at as objectified in institutions, and it is furthermore carried up to its very origin in the Divine Will, at which point also begins its dual tendency into what we call good and evil, whereof the grand process is indicated in the alienation through Adam and in the return through Christ.

II. At the end of the fifth Canto comes the transition to the next Sphere. They, Beatrice and Dante, suddenly enter the planet of Mercury, whereat there is a new display of splendors. Beatrice becomes more joyous and the planet itself grows more lucent and smiles with her. Dante, of course, follows their example ; internally he must be ready, when the outward manifestation takes place.

Then the souls begin to approach, " more than a thousand lights," not faces as in the Moon, but eyes sparkling and nestled in their own flames. A great increase of illumination, resulting from the

love brought and called forth by the new-comers. The view of the other blessed increases blessedness through charity, whereof the manifestation is seen in light.

One of these spirits speaks and offers to impart his own knowledge. Participation is the word, kindled and illuminant by love. So all the Paradiso is written in lines of light. It has no darkness like Inferno, no sunset like Purgatorio, being one long illumination of Heaven.

*Canto Sixth.* Dante has just asked these two questions of a spirit with whom he was talking: Who art thou, and why art thou here, in this planet, "which veils itself to mortals with another's rays," namely the Sun's. The present Canto is in form an answer to these two questions; but it interweaves a philosophy of history, showing the development of Empire and Church in Time.

I. A man of great fame and power: "Cæsar I was, and I am Justinian;" the emperor's authority with all its glory is gone, but the person remains, being eternal. He tells what his great work was, he was the reformer of the law. What Julius Cæsar did politically Justinian did for jurisprudence; both were grand unifiers and organizers, the one of scattered conflicting states, the other of scattered conflicting laws.

Moreover, Justinian is a Christian, converted, according to Dante, from the Eutychian

heresy, which was a turn toward Oriental thought. But he chiefly devotes himself to the organization of justice, like a true Roman, whose voice he is here. Being a Christian, he will not neglect the Church. He likewise utters Dante's political opinions, especially in reference to the Guelfs and Ghibelines, both of which parties are wrong, as shown by the history of Empire and Church, which is now given.

II. "I begin from the hour when Pallas died to give it (the Eagle) a kingdom." The first instance is the sacrifice of the individual for Rome far back in its fabulous time. And this is what man must now do: sacrifice himself for his State, thus he becomes a great hero, truly a Roman. Then many examples are adduced by the poet, the main ones of Roman history, in which we note a double process: the individual becomes mighty just through his surrender of individuality to his country, and his country becomes mighty through its mighty individuals and their devotion. The culmination is reached in Julius Cæsar, when the State becomes universal, quite the whole world, and the man becomes universal, being its conqueror and unifier. This process of unification by Cæsar when Rome was falling to pieces, is quite fully given here by Dante.

When Rome had become universal, and all individualism had been subjected to the State and put under Justice, the second and far greater

step takes place — the crucifixion of Christ under Tiberius, the beginning of the Church, and the organization of Mercy. Here we must try to grasp Dante's conception of this great transition. Christ died for "the old sin" of Adam, involving the whole race; he had to be condemned by Justice, which was Rome's world-historical function; she had to conquer the world, then to judge it, and, we may add, to damn it, for such was its desert. Thus Rome, having jurisdiction over the whole race (so Dante reasons here and more fully in his *De Monarchia*) condemned through her representative (Pontius Pilate) and punished Jesus Christ, the man as representative of the race. In such a manner did authority, being organized primarily for this end, proclaim and fulfill its decree concerning a world-offense. Christ, therefore, as suffering for the sin of Adam, suffered justly. Yet, on the other hand, Christ, as suffering from the malice and hate of the Jews, suffered unjustly. Hence these Jews have to be punished by these same Romans, the bearers of Justice, which punishment took place through Titus destroying Jerusalem; the Roman eagle "hastened to exact vengeance of the vengeance;" thus in punishing both Christ and the Jews Roman Justice has completely done its work.

Difficulties enough can be pointed out in this view. The Romans are praised and the Jews

are damned for the same deed. But what underlies this somewhat fanciful argumentation? The sin of Adam was the sin of pride, of individualism, which has to be rooted out of the world ere man can truly exist — the primordial sin or limit of the individual (see the *Purgatorio* under *Pride*). There are two grand disciplines here noted; the first is that of Rome, which subjected individualism (selfishness) to the secular institution, to the State, to Justice. But the second discipline is the deeper one: the doctrine of Christ as illustrated in his life and death is that the individual is to give himself for his race, not merely for Rome, is to render to his fellow-citizen not simply justice, but to his fellow-man love. The Roman was not individual in punishing Christ; the Jew was, and so had to be punished himself.

Thus all Roman History is but to bring forth the Christian world. Its greatest deeds were in the providential order a means to an end, of which it was unconscious. The Empire brought forth the Church, and at a later time the Empire under Charlemagne succored her.

The inference which Dante would have us draw is that both the political parties of his time, Guelfs and Ghibelines, violate this historic purpose of the Empire. The Guelfs oppose it, though it is and always has been an integral part of the world-governing principle. The Ghibe-



lines use it (the Empire) for their own partisan and selfish purposes ; they degrade it from its universal function. Thus the poet clearly shows himself out of tune with both the political parties of his time and puts himself in accord with the spirit of the World's History, which is indeed the supreme point of view.

III. The Canto ends with telling why Justinian is here in the planet Mercury, not higher, not lower. "This little star is furnished with good spirits who have been active in order that they might obtain honor and fame." Good spirits, having done good deeds, yet their goodness obscured with personal motives, honor and fame. That is, goodness is not its own end, not its own content in the present case ; the soul is accordingly not self-illuminated.

The environment corresponds. Mercury has its light hidden in the Sun's greater light so that it can rarely be seen. Hence "the rays of true love rest upon it with less life." Thus Dante implies that Justinian acted more from the love of honor and fame than of goodness. Another symbolic suggestion may be noted. This is the soul of Justinian, the lawgiver, organizer of Justice — a great good. But Justice is surpassed, is hid in the sun of Charity, perchance of Theology ; the planet itself is lost in the greater light, and the face of the imperial legislator vanishes into sparkles.

With the ancient example of the active man is coupled the modern one, Romeo, "whose work, great and fair, was ill-requited." Some strong touch of sympathy the poet shows for this man's career, like his own perchance; after doing well for his country, "he departed from it, poor and old, begging his bread, crust by crust." Surely somewhat of Dante's case; "and if the world knew the heart which he kept," even in misfortune, digesting fate — enough, that is the Hero, and is for the most part Dante, though not always.

In these two Cantos — Sixth and Seventh — we have essentially the statement of the transition from the Hebrew and Roman worlds into the Christian world. Rome and Judea unite in bringing about the death of Christ, which, however, is essentially their own death. On the other hand the death of Christ is essentially the life of Christianity, His death is the death of death. Thus in the spiritual view, which will manifest itself as reality also, the truth is just the reverse of what seems. The Romans and Jews seemed to slay Christ, but were slain by Him, or by his idea, while Christ just through his death slew his slayers, and lives to-day.

Here verily is a process in which thought is in the habit of getting badly entangled, but from which it can free itself and attain to a pure view of the truth. This process underlies a great

epoch of the world, and is the basis of Dante's poem just at this point. So we may consider it in place for discussion.

No doubt Rome gave to the world Justice, universal Justice, and organized it over its conquered territory. The return of the deed to the doer is the Roman ethical consciousness; other peoples have had the same thought, but not in such completeness.

But why just this function of Rome in the history of the race? It was the grand discipline of selfishness, and the world was selfish, grasping, unjust; individualism was its principle, of which Rome is the mighty castigator, though Rome was also selfish and individual too; she served up to the world its own deed, being herself the embodiment thereof, and hence in her own action self-undoing.

This Roman work, however, makes the world tragic, which loses its freedom, being enslaved in its discipline; it loses its life, being treated to its own principle. Mark, Rome herself is as bad, she too is selfish in her conquest, thus she must come under her own law in the end.

Justice triumphs, but man perishes in the process. He is freed of his selfishness, but with it goes his life. He loses individualism, but with it goes individuality. His discipline through justice destroys the sin, but also the man with the sin. Now the question arises, upon which

the World's History turns: How can we destroy the sin but save the man? Evil is self-destructive, and if man is wholly evil, nothing is left but annihilation. Justice is the outer mastery of sin, which, however, undoes the sinner.

Now this outer mastery is to become an inner one; the man himself is to go through the process of destroying sin within himself; evil is to be overcome not by the external power of justice but by an internal judgment, which, however, saves the judge. This is the process of Repentance, satisfying justice, undoing the sin, yet rescuing the sinner. So we begin to move out of the old Roman world and enter a new one—which saves not damns—it is the world of Mercy.

The same doctrine reconstructs Death also, which was supposed to be the grand limit; but it is really the death of Death, negation of the negative. Thus the thought of Immortality enters the world along with Mercy; the one cancels the limitations of Justice and the other cancels the limitations of life. Death assails life but really undoes itself and brings forth the Eternal; Justice assails wrong, but really brings forth Mercy, after undoing itself merely as Justice.

Here we reach the Christian stand-point, and Christ is this process. Those who slew him really slew themselves and made him live as Christ. First was his incarnation, his humanity, whereby

he is exposed to Justice, to the great Roman discipline. Second, he collides, as individual, with the individualism of the Jews and perishes by a Roman judgment. Third, it is through death that he overcomes Death, and through justice that he transcends Justice.

Adam, the first race-man, feels the limit of individuality, dashes against it in the hope of breaking it down and of realizing his infinite nature. Thus he transgresses the law, which is, after all, just himself as divine, as universal, just his infinite nature. Hence he is expelled from Paradise, the realm of the Divine; he is unable to harmonize the man with the God, which two beings now struggle with each other in a perpetual wrestle. Such is the Old Testament.

The second race-man, Christ, appears, who declares that his mission is mediation between Man and God; he will harmonize this ancient strife dating quite from Man's creation. First, he claims to be the son of God and to be sent as mediator. Second, he claims to be a man, born into flesh and frailty, with the old struggle still in him. He takes upon himself all the consequences of Adam's transgression and their punishment. Thirdly, He transforms this punishment into a means of destroying the transgression and saving the man, so that suffering and even sin become a discipline of the soul unto perfection.

Such are the outlines of the great Hebrew World-Mythus, of the transgressor and the redeemer, dominating the religious consciousness past, present and future. It underlies the *Divine Comedy*, and especially this part called *Paradiso*. Mythical it is we say, set forth by and to the imagination.

Now we can utter the same fact in another form, that of the Reason, which transcends images and expresses itself in thoughts. Justice has destroyed Pride in the individual, but Mercy has saved the individual, who now recognizes himself, not as excluding others but including all. A universal Person is thus the true conception of the individual; he must be himself, but in being himself he must be all in spirit. "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Indeed the Lord's prayer, as we noted in the *Purgatory*, is the grand antidote against Pride or Individualism. All the words of Christ go to train the individual into his universal personality, in which he recognizes both God and his fellow-man. Justice can smite Pride in its transgression, but cannot call forth Love with its harmony. Hence arises the new institution, the Church, alongside that of Justice or the State. The Church has the function to train all its members into participation with the universal person, Christ, through whom they are one in Love.

Christ we must see is the embodiment of that

universal person ; hence he is the Son of God on the one hand, yet a man incarnate on the other, in the great Christian Mythus. So we must all believe on him, the divine-human, the universal personality.

We call it the Christ-Mythus, though we are aware that such a nomenclature offends some good people, for they invariably associate the mythical with the untrue and the unreal. But nothing in the world is truer than the genuine Mythus, being the deepest faith of the race as uttered by the race, for no individual can create a Mythus.

The Hebrew Mythus has furnished us with the two typical men of the race, Adam and Christ, between whose natures hover humanity's perdition and salvation. The fundamental outline of Dante's utterance is mythical, but plays over into Theology, which seeks to formulate for the understanding certain events in the mythical process; but it leaves and must leave the main difficulty, the dualism into good and evil, unexplained, for that is a matter beyond the understanding, being a religious mystery, which Faith alone seizes.

Adam's sin is said to have been Pride, the sin of Individualism, fundamental in man. He disobeyed the divine injunction, asserted himself against God, against the universal. He did not recognize the other person in the universe, denied

in reality himself; so Justice brought home to him his deed, in the person of Christ. This is the race-man, the second one, undoing the transgression of the first one.

All the Bibles of the world are mythical; so is certainly the Old Testament, and the New also, mainly; this is indeed their eternal worth, being that which makes them books of the people for all time. They are not theologies, not philosophies; sad would it be for the race if they had been. Mythology is deeper than theology, the latter indeed rests upon the former.

The greatest fact, then, of the Roman time is that the second race-man, Christ, collides with Justice in the great scheme of saving the fallen man from his guilt and wrong. Justice will smite him with his own deed and overwhelm him, for he can never rise under mere Justice. A new world-principle, of which Justice is only a portion, a means, must extend its hand and help him up. Christ perishes individually, to show that he endures personally. Christian faith is the belief, conscious or unconconscious, that death is but a negation of a negation, and hence a new life. Justice solves the problem of sin, but negatively; Christ solves it, but positively. He is subject to Justice, which, however, in destroying the mortal, calls forth immortality.

*Canto Seventh.* A short hymn is sung by Justinian, made up of Latin and Hebrew, the languages



of the New Church and of the Old, addressed specially to God, who "outshines all these lower realms." Hereupon the speaker vanishes "in a dance," and Beatrice comes to the front answering Dante's doubts, which Justinian could hardly meet. There are three questions distinctly marked off in the Canto.

I. The first question comes from the previous Canto: How can a just vengeance be justly punished? Why should the Jews be punished for the death of Christ? The reason given is the theological one and is derived from Aquinas: Christ, inasmuch as he was a man, suffered justly; but inasmuch as he was God, unjustly. Moreover, the Romans deserve praise, and the Jews condemnation for the same act; nay, God himself not only permitted the deed, but gave his only-begotten son.

The whole difficulty springs from Adam, "the man who was never born," who had a limit put upon him by God and at once proceeded to transgress that limit; disobedience through pride, or individualism is the original sin. He is Adam the race-man, who "in damning himself, damned all his progeny"—the representative, therefore, or type. This transgression further back sprang from the Devil, wherein we reach to the mythical fountain head. But the second man, the Word, Christ, took on this nature of Adam, and atoned for the sin.

Such is the theological scheme, resting upon a mythical foundation and trying to explain the same in certain places. But it leaves us entangled still, in spite of all its ingenious subtlety. Theology, with its complete separation of good and evil, of the negative and the positive, cannot explain the Mythus.

The Romans were merely the homicides, the Jews the Deicides. Yet the latter caused the greatest, most beneficial event in the World's History, and get only malediction. Truly in every mighty occurrence there is a divine and a diabolic element. The death of Christ was the grand blessing of Time, yet it was pleasing to the Devil as well as to God; indeed we may say that the arch-fiend brought it about. But therein he must be seen undoing himself; his malice against the good saved the world from him. Or, going back to the primitive legend, we may say that the Devil undid his first work in Paradise; he is inherently comic, grotesque, self-stultifying.

Now, in the crucifixion, the Jews represent the Devil's part in the old legend. He is malice embodied, but is also malice overreaching itself; he intends to destroy the good, but really destroys himself and brings forth the good. God intended and foresaw this result, and hence gave his son, well-knowing that through the Devil (or the negative) only would Christ be revealed as God's son, and master the demon; and just this

is the process of Divine Goodness. But mark the importance of the Devil. What if Adam had not disobeyed? Well, that leaves a big door open; but we may affirm that he never could have been Adam — the race-man. What if the Jews had not crucified Christ? There would have been no Christ, at least no Christianity.

Thus the Devil belongs to the World-Order and is not to be excluded; with reverence be it said that he is a member of the Divine Family, and as such he appears in the Book of Job. Now, Theology is determined to put him out of the Family of God, into which the Mythus very justly places him. But Theology is herself put out in the effort, for here he comes always from the outside somewhere, nobody knows exactly whence, and the result is, the God or the Universal is limited, finite, bounded on all sides by this Devil or the evil principle, and the infinite, all powerful, all-knowing Deity of the Theologians is simply a contradiction.

But in the most important events of the world, secular as well as religious, the Devil has his part in which, as Mephistopheles expresses it, "he wills the bad yet works the good." Take the greatest event which is nearest to us. Supposing the emancipation of the slaves to be a great and good work, who did it? Abraham Lincoln representing the Divine, or Jefferson Davis representing the Devil? I once heard a negro argue this

diabolic side. Yes, says he, Jeff Davis did more for the freedom of the colored man, in starting the war against the will of the North, than Abe Lincoln with his proclamation. In fact this proclamation could never have been issued without the persistent, long-continued co-operation of Davis.

We might construct a Mythus out of the event. The original sin of the slave-stealer was punished, it sought to defend and to promote itself, and so destroyed itself, being really undone by itself. Such a Mythus would not fail of showing the part of Satan in the great event, and would run essentially in the lines of the story of Paradise, which is, in fact, the one great all-inclusive Mythus of man.

Very subtle is this play of the Negative; it is indeed the old Serpent, always sneaking by some hidden path into every Paradise. Even the part of Judas seems necessary, in order that the supreme good of the world be brought about. Hence among the Gnostics a sect arose, professedly Christian, yet with its Gospel of Judas, who is said to have foreseen that Satan and the dark powers intended to stop the work of salvation by preventing the death of Jesus, and that he, Judas, was just the man to thwart them in their design. He knew that the crucifixion was to be the great blessing, and so gave Christ up to his enemies with a kiss, even foreseeing himself

branded for all time as a traitor — which was just his sacrifice of self. This view is contrary to the narrative which states the motive of Judas to have been money and his deed a betrayal of his master. Still in the Gospel of the New Testament, he is a part of the process which brings about the great ransom, and he stands condemned for that part. The Gospel also gives the true result; evil is self-undoing, Judas hanged himself.

II. Another difficulty rises in the mind of Dante: Why should God choose just this method for our redemption? Could he not have taken some other way? This question is distinctly a theological one, and is argued by Thomas Aquinas. If God had a divine necessity in the present matter, is he not limited? Here again comes up the eternal struggle between the finite and infinite in the thought of divinity.

The Mythos gives this as the one way, in the form of a story. Theology reflects on the Mythos and notes the limitation to the one method, then thinks of other methods possible to God. But Philosophy comes back to unity, and declares that this is the one fundamental process in man and in history. God, it is said, might free man of his guilt without the atonement, without even repentance. But that is counter to the conception of God, who is just this complete movement. Again He might have stopped man from falling, might

have kept Free-Will away from man. But this would destroy both man and God. The Negative must undo itself and reach the positive; the Devil must be permitted to get rid of himself, else he cannot be exorcised. Not merely allowed is this by God, but it is He, is the Divine movement. Deity does not permit or even grant Free-Will from the outside, but he is Free-Will, and its movement.

Dante gives as the original source of man's redemption the Goodness of God, and its freedom from all envy. Hence in the creation man received three things, immortality, freedom, and likeness to God. Through sin he lost the last two, which had to be redeemed only by giving the Son. Hard is it for this reasoning to take hold of our consciousness.

Moreover the thought will creep in: Did God in creating the Universe, create the Devil? Did supreme Goodness make supreme badness? Or are they both one thing finally or phases of the same process? Theology separates them and so ends in a dualistic view of the world, after all its explanation and protestation. The Mythus unites the two sides in one image or action; Philosophy unites them in one concrete thought and its movement. Theology feels its own inadequacy as a world-view; hence its tendency is to rise into Philosophy, or to drop back into Mythology.

The work of the Negative in the world is the difficult matter to understand, yet is the turning point of the spiritual Universe. On all sides we meet it. In Theology the question comes up concerning the Jews of the crucifixion. They sinned, says Aquinas, as crucifiers of God. Yet God willed just this crucifixion. The Jews then sinned for carrying out the will of God and of Christ too, who willed his own passion. Surely this is not the right way of grasping the subject. The play of the Negative seems too much for St. Thomas. Yet let us be grateful; he saved the spiritual heritage of Europe against Pantheism through his reflective Theology.

III. We have now the final but less weighty question: Why do the elements perish and not man? Here are indicated two kinds of origin: the first is the creation, "in their entire being," of souls, angels, heavens; second are the things "informed with a created virtue," as the elements, plants, animals. The two are immediate and mediate creation; "virtue informing was created in these stars," hence they are the mediate principle. Even the first human body, that of Adam, had to be made immediately by God, hence it was immortal; from which fact Dante hints that an argument for resurrection can be drawn. In the present section we have the acknowledgment of the starry influence, but also its limit is drawn, which at last implies free-will

and hence responsibility; this doctrine Dante never surrenders. But let us conclude this terribly theological Canto.

**VENUS.** After Mercury comes Venus, named from a Heathen deity, whose influence has been transported from Olympus to Heaven. The chief physical characteristic of this planet, as noted by the poet, is that the shadow of the Earth is thrown upon it or into its Sphere (IX. 113). A touch it has, therefore, of terrestrial darkness, which here takes the form of sensuous love. Again we observe that the Will has a content inadequate to the universal good, which is its highest motive; it is determined by something beneath itself, hence is not free in the true sense, is not self-determined.

The subject-matter in this Sphere pertains more to persons than in the preceding Spheres, and is not so theological. Quite incidentally the question of diversity among children of the same parents is discussed, and a supernatural cause is assigned. The poet's personal relations give tone to this Sphere; it is his Sphere, in which he places lovers and singers of love-songs.

A structural point may be noticed. The poet makes all his Triads end with a Canto, and thus rounds them off, while the Spheres end within the Canto, with the single exception of Venus, which starts at the beginning of the eighth Canto.



This fact, in general, shows the poet marking off his Triads and his Spheres in different ways.

*Canto Eighth.* They enter into the third Sphere, Venus, who was believed to ray forth "foolish love" in the old heathen world. But now there is a wise love manifested in this star by Beatrice, "whom I saw become more fair." Also many other souls in the form of lights moved about more or less swift, "in proportion to their eternal vision." Then one came near and began: "We are all ready for thy pleasure that thou mayst have joy of us." The happiness of others is their happiness.

Here the mood of altruism is declared to be the heavenly temper. In the preceding passage there is the contrast between the terrestrial and celestial, or perchance Heathen and Christian love, Venus and Beatrice. Still it is to be remarked that the old place, the planet, is kept. The Goddess was in the star and wrought directly upon man, who was the helpless victim—such was the old world "in its peril." But the epicycle, the capricious retrograde movement of Venus, is yet present with Dante. In the preceding planet we had the law, now it is love, which is higher than the law, but not yet perfect; it has still a dash of caprice, being sometimes after and sometimes before the face of the Sun, the great luminary.

II. The spirit speaking is Carlo Martello, of

Hungary, who married Clemence, daughter of the Emperor Rudolph. He was heir prospective of dominions scattered all over Europe, which are here recounted in some detail by Dante, who seems to have been acquainted with the Prince, inasmuch as the latter with two hundred gay young cavaliers came to Florence on a visit in the year 1294 (Villani says 1295), and had a good time there, which was long remembered.

The reason why Dante places him here in the planet of Venus, may be inferred from the character of Carlo as drawn by an old commentator: "Still a youth, he showed himself a son of Venus, because amorous, gracious, handsome, full of attraction, health, beauty, wealth, leisure, and lustihood." One wonders what his bond of sympathy with Dante may have been. When we read that Carlo was fond of songs and love-poems, probably we have found the key. The sonnets and canzoni of the young Florentine poet have here in the present Canto an echo in Carlo's speech: *Voi che intendendo il terzo cielo movete* — Ye who by intelligence move the Third Heaven; which seems a reminiscence of Dante and Carlo together at Florence, singing canzoni, possibly serenading some fair ones of the city, for certainly Gemma Donati would not have held the poet back. The early death of this Prince, Dante, now advanced in years, regards as one of his misfortunes.

But Carlo has a brother, avaricious, grasping, yet sprung of a liberal father. The question comes up: Why this difference between parents and children? Whence comes this diversity in talent, in disposition, in tendencies, or to put the question more generally: What is the source of individuality?

III. The diversity of individuals is carried back to the supreme source, to God and his purpose as regards Civil Society. If Nature were simply permitted to produce her effects, the sons would be like the father, and all would have one line of tastes, tempers and capacities. The result would be no organism of Civil Society with its great variety of functions and duties. Absolute discord would take place between men's aptitudes and desires on the one hand, and their vocations on the other. "Not arts but ruins" would be the consequence, which Providence prevents.

But how diversify individuals? God put Intelligences into the stars, and these work upon the terrestrial individual, and thus break up uniformity, producing many characters for the multifarious functions of Civil Society. The stellar influence is the means for bringing about diversity. In such manner the lawgiver, the priest, the king and the craftsman are born into an organized world ready for and needing their talents.

Hardly can we accept this ground of diversity for human characters at the present time. Heredity is now the catch-word, but it does not solve the problem. Something of the natural process here below Dante saw ; in each human soul there was a divine impress, a providential cast specially given to it and to nought else in the Universe. The old Greeks and others made their heroes and great men the sons of Gods by mortal women ; Dante makes all men partake of divine generation which, however, must come, according to him, through the stars to man.

Still there is often a mal-adjustment between talent and vocation in human society. Fortune or circumstance often forces the man out of his natural bent, and compels him to be a priest when he was born to gird the sword. So discord enters into the social condition in spite of the stars, yes in spite of God.

*Canto Ninth.* Still in the Heaven of Venus, or Love ; on the whole, a very strange room in the celestial temple it is, with something earthly in it, very earthly ; " the shadow which your world (earth) makes comes to a point " here in Venus. There is much historical matter in the Canto, about which we shall say nothing. But there are three people mentioned, at whom we may look a little.

I. The first is Cunizza, sister of the tyrant Ezze-  
lin, whom we have already met in *Inferno*. A

woman devoted to love of the sensuous type: "here I shine because the light of this star conquered me." Certainly Dante is not harsh toward her: "Joyfully I pardon in myself the cause of my lot," which is apparently this planet; and the matter "gives me no trouble," no reproaches of conscience; "which fact would perchance seem hard to your vulgar folk." Hard it does seem that Cunizza is in Heaven and an example. Why not below, at least in Purgatory? Dante does show tenderness to the one guilty of sensuous love; that we have noticed before, and may now observe again. No word of repentance is mentioned in the text, but we may supply it if we choose, with some of the old commentators.

II. The second person here is a man, a great lover and singer, Folco of Marseilles, medieval troubadour. "This Heaven (of Venus) now stamps itself with me, as I was stamped then with it." Still he is singing and Dante wishes to hear him, but at present his voice "charms heaven with the song of those sacred fires," the Seraphim above. All the old lovers antique, here cited out of Ovid, "burned not more than I, as long as it beseemed my hairs." Age and impotence stop gratification, Folco repented toward the end of life, turned monk and rose to the office of bishop, in which he became a persecutor of the Albigeneses, those simple-minded puritans (Cathari) who seemed to hold that purity was a part of religion.

But there is no repentance in Heaven: "Here one repents not, but smiles, not at the fault, which returns not to the mind, but at the goodness which ordered and foresaw." Providence, then, causes the smile, and on Providence one is always looking in Heaven. Indeed one acquires the look of Providence, and knows with the same what is going on in the mind. Folco next points out and names the third person of this Canto.

III. This is Rahab, the harlot of Jericho, who concealed the spies of Joshua among the flax-stalks on the roof of her house, and thus betrayed her country to the Israelites. Very emphatic and strong is the poet's favor toward this very dubious ancient biblical woman. She is in the peace of Heaven (*si tranquilla*), she is in the highest grade of this Sphere of Venus. She was the first one of the Old Testament worthies "taken up by the triumph of Christ," before Adam or Abraham. Whence this marvelous honor? Already some writers in the New Testament had saved her "through faith" (*Hebrews XI. 31*), which is hard to believe as the word of the Lord, but which is rather a Jewish theological sophistication.

On the whole, the present Canto in its three typical characters cannot be called very edifying morally. What is the matter with Dante? He seems to be getting lax in heaven. Is it a new touch of Orientalism with its sensuous rewards

of the faithful in Paradise? Cunizza does not inspire, Folco is not an example of goodness, Rahab is altogether repulsive. She doubly violates the ethical code, she is untrue to family and country, and is unrepentant, as far as we are told. She is a traitress and a harlot, and yet she is placed here in highest grade of her celestial sphere. O Dante!

Very curious is the process which has brought her so much glory. Her deed, negative in the last degree to the ethical institutions of man, gave the Promised Land to the Hebrews, and this was a very important link in the World's History. Bad it was morally, yet it was turned to working out the good in the providential order. Hence she has been defended, and, in a sense, canonized in Hebrewdom and Christendom. In her case and its history we again find that strange subtle play of the negative, which has so often confounded the best minds of the race.

By the same reasoning Judas should have his place in the Christian Heaven, since his wickedness was a link in the chain of the greatest good the world ever saw. So the Gnostics, or a sect of them, had a Gospel of Judas, which well corresponds to this Gospel of Rahab in Dante. Indeed what else is the Devil but he who works all good through evil; so we could have the Gospel of the Devil too.

To such straits Dante has been led by his the-

ology, which has sophisticated Rahab, who is quite a big fragment of the bad, into Heaven. But Dante, true poet, when he becomes mythical, knows exactly what to do with Satan. In the bottom of the pit, at the center of the Earth, toward which all matter tends—there is the place for the Devil, for Judas, and, I should say, Rahab belongs somewhere down there betraying her country and selling her body for coin.

A very peculiar Canto, with suggestions and characters not celestial; rather the most surprising Canto in the whole *Divine Comedy*. Hardly did we expect this just here; one thinks that the present Canto must have got displaced somehow, and wandered off hither from its position in the *Inferno* or *Purgatorio*.

#### MIDDLE HEAVEN.

So named because it is the middle Triad of the nine Spheres of that which we have called Finite Heaven. Moreover it is a mean; its character, to a certain extent, is mediatorial; it seeks to bring down and realize Christ upon Earth.

The Will, accordingly, has no longer an inadequate content; it wills the Good as universal, and seeks to do the same. Its works, however, are essentially terrestrial; its effort in the present Triad is not so much to aspire beyond unto the Infinite, as to put this Infinite into finite forms for man's comprehension and action.



There are here three Spheres — the Sun, Mars, Jupiter — occupying eleven Cantos (X.-XX.), just one-third of the whole Cantica. Thus it is the longest of the four divisions, and the most complete. I think that the poet intends these three Spheres to be grouped together into a Whole, and then to be looked at separately.

I. As to the general physical characteristic of this Triad, its bodies shine by their own light, according to Dante, self-illuminated, without any shadow. Herein lies a contrast with the Lower Heaven or First Triad, all of whose bodies manifest some physical defect. Moreover the middle position of the present Triad hints, as above indicated, its mediatorial nature.

II. The student of the poem naturally desires to connect these three Spheres in thought. The Sun is the Sphere of Theology, which seeks to bring the great act of mediation into the realm of the Understanding by means of dogma and argumentation. Theology in the Sun specially asserts and defends the doctrine of the Trinity as the basis of the Christian world, therein preserving the individual against Oriental Pantheism. This was notably the work of Aquinas.

In Mars is the practical counterpart of what we find in the speculative Sun — the Crusader. He seeks to put down outwardly by force of arms the Paynim in the East, and to recover the Holy Sepulchre, which is not to be lost. Thus he gives

his life to overcome the grand Oriental limit to Christendom, as the theologian gives his life to an intellectual warfare in the same cause. In both cases the will of the individual sacrifices itself to attain true individuality.

Such are the two sides of the Church, theoretical and practical, which vindicate the individual as immortal and as divine-human. Now comes the third phase, the secular world of Justice, which is realized in the Empire. Justice is to return to man his deed and thereby make him free of his guilt. Thus it is a very important part of the Divine Order, being essentially the realm of peace, to which man is to rise out of war, though the war be a holy one, like that of the Crusader. Note that Dante puts Jupiter above Mars; the great fruitage is Justice, which the poet has to explain and defend with a good deal of trouble in the case of the damnation of the Heathen.

Thus it will be seen that the present Triad rests upon the two world-institutions — Church and Empire, both of which are shown to have at bottom one purpose.

III. With Middle Heaven begins the use of the Spectacular Symbol as a means of representing Paradise to the imagination. There is one such symbol in each Sphere—in the Sun are the Wheels, in Mars the Cross, in Jupiter the Eagle. It produces a grand spectacle of light and motion in the

celestial body where it is seen, and hints the character thereof. As this symbol will be henceforth one of the most striking poetic instrumentalities for depicting Heaven, we may here consider its general character.

(1) It is composed of individual souls, points of light, flashes of flame, and these souls together make the figure, which is thus produced by association. A social whole it suggests, it has unity of spirit, which all the individuals seek to bring forth. Individualism, which we noted as clinging to Lower Heaven, has vanished here, yet the individuals are still all active, not lost or absorbed, but producing the totality.

(2) The Symbol is endowed with two kinds of motion. The first is that of change within itself, yet it remains itself in this change; a perpetual process it has, it is not a dead thing but shows life and movement, nay self movement. In fact it rises to self-conscious movement, it knows itself and speaks in the Eagle of Jupiter.

The second kind of motion which the Symbol manifests is transformation; it passes from one shape to another, or gives shadowy forecastings thereof. The Wheels in the Sun begin to have around them still larger Wheels beyond; the Cross in Mars finally flashes forth the body of the crucified One; and the Eagle is also transformed. Not only life but evolution is suggested in the movements of the symbol.

(3) We can also observe a gradation in the three spectacular Symbols of this second Triad. The Wheel is mechanical, even though a soul speaks out of it; the form of scholastic Theology, even in Aquinas, often suggests mechanism, especially of the rotary kind. Mill Dante himself calls this Symbol, evidently suggesting the theological mill. One often wonders whether he gave to the Heaven of the Theologians this humorous touch with design. But the Cross with its flash of the crucifixion is a far more spiritual Symbol than the turning Wheel; now the suggestion of sacrifice is paramount. In case of the Eagle the totality speaks, not a single soul, as was the way in the two previous Spheres; Justice is voiced by the Empire itself, not even by an Emperor; the idea of association thus dominates in this Symbol, which, moreover, is taken from an animate object.

IV. The spirit who is rising from Sphere to Sphere is Dante accompanied by Beatrice. She is the means of his ascending beyond and beyond; she must be first within him, then she appears in new glory outside of him with her eyes and smiles, and also with her words. As she defines herself, she is the light between Truth (objective) and Intellect (subjective). In the present Heaven she stands in relation to the spectacular Symbol also, and to the speakers therein, the whole constituting a continuous

celestial drama amid a marvelous illuminated scenery.

**THE SUN.** A very important part the Sun has already had in the Purgatorio, illuminating that realm and dividing day from night, and measuring time. In the present case it hints with its pure light the intellect, and stands for the grand medieval science, Theology.

As already indicated, its spectacular Symbol is the Wheel (called also the Garland and the Mill by the poet) which the souls here form and which turns around Dante and Beatrice as its center. Such is the movement, a rotating circle of flames, one of which speaks when the Wheel stops. Behold a second Wheel moving around the first, and furnishing its speaker also. Then a gleam of the third Wheel begins to appear when traveler and guide pass beyond. Note the double movement of the figure: it changes in itself by rotating, then it changes shape by the addition of new Wheels. Both self-movement and self-development are hinted in these two spectacular manifestations.

The central speculative doctrine of all Christian Theology is touched in the first lines of the first Canto of this Sphere, namely the Trinity. The same doctrine is repeatedly set forth in the course of the journey through the Sun in divers ways; it is indeed the key-note to all the music of this Sphere, and to much that comes hereafter.

Accordingly we are now to deal with Theologians, and the first fact about them is that they are in two groups, which are monastic orders, Franciscan and Dominican, a religious phenomenon of Dante's century, to which he ascribes a new life in the Church. Monasticism is here one of the grand facts of the age, as well as of Heaven; it is man's desperate attempt to conquer his lower nature by a kind of self-extermination. For if monasticism be the true thing, then the race must go down through Truth. Secular life was an over-match for religious life, if both were allowed to flow in the same channel. Man had to abjure Family, Free-Will, and Property here and now, in order to gain the hereafter. With terrific violence not only individualism but individuality itself was suppressed in the individual.

Nobody can well doubt that the means were necessary for the time, and became a mighty bulwark to arrest the worldliness of the Church, growing material through its temporal possessions and authority. So the monasticism of the 13th century is a return to the poverty and renunciation of the primitive Gospel and its Disciples. As such, it wrought powerfully upon Dante.

The movement is dualistic, and so treated by the poet. One of the founders, St. Francis of Assisi, has ardor, love, is seraphic; the other, St. Dominic, has light, intelligence, is cherubic.

Both orders are active, as preachers; exaltation, mysticism will be the tendency of one; reflection, theology, will the tendency of the other.

This same double tendency will be found in all the literature of Christianity; the mystics and the rationalists constitute the two great Christian camps. In the present Heaven of the Sun, the realm of Theology, the two classes are marked, and are recognized by each other, with full appreciation and love. The two great spokesmen of each tendency are also present and speak: St. Thomas, a Dominican, the Theologian of Christendom, and St. Bonaventure, a Franciscan, and rapt mystic.

It may be affirmed that the same twofoldness runs through the whole *Paradiso*, coming out strong, however, here in the Sun. To which side does Dante lean? Sometimes to one, and sometimes to the other; he evidently seeks to retain both. A devoted reader of Aquinas we see him everywhere to be; but in the end he throws aside even Beatrice, the celestial expounder of Thomas, for St. Bernard the Mystic.

In order to give a visible image symbolic of the two mighty influences, which extend through the Church back to the beginning, the poet forms two great Wheels, one inside the other, revolving with different yet concordant motion, twelve stars to the wheel. These are the spirits of the Theologians of the two kinds—the Thomists inside

the Mystics — with movement, and song and speech, and also theological discussion.

*Canto Tenth.* The introduction is the highest theme which can concern the Theologians, and which is specially the subject of their thought: the Trinity — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—in itself and as creating the Universe. *Creare est commune toti Trinitati* (Aquinas).

Whoever looks upon the creation, “cannot help tasting him.” So the poet asks his reader to glance at the Sun, and the relation of the ecliptic to the equator, and therein to behold “the order of the world,” which invites to divine investigation, to Theology. Here is the home of “the fourth family of the High Father, who always satisfies them, showing how He breathes and begets,” revealing His Spirit and His Son. Such is the subject now illuminated — the Trinity, first and last theme of Christian Theology.

Beatrice only says a word or two, when “my love so sunk itself in Him,” that she was “eclipsed in forgetfulness.” The Wheel of stars appears, one speaks; it is Thomas Aquinas, who names the twelve splendors of the circle, which, when he has done, moves and sings “in such harmony and sweetness that it cannot be known,” save above.

*Canto Eleventh.* An outburst at the start, comparing the pursuits of mortals, the merely finite



ends of men, with me, Dante, freed of all these things, in the company of Beatrice above in Heaven, the infinite realm.

I. The Wheel revolved and came back to its first position, when St. Thomas begins speaking again. He distinguishes the two great founders of monastic orders, St. Francis, "all seraphic in ardor," and St. Dominic, "a splendor of cherubic light;" the one attending more to deeds, the other to doctrine, the one leaning to the mystical side, the other to the intellectual side, of Christianity.

II. Aquinas, being a Dominican, gives the life of St. Francis, a marvelous life, more than a doctrine. He had a conflict with parent, which St. Thomas, having had similar one himself, may well have appreciated. Then came his vow to poverty, the original spouse of Christ, whose example St. Francis evidently sought to pattern after. The first followers are named, his mission among the Heathen is mentioned, how he preached to the Arabs, Semites, right on Christ's soil, quite as the latter preached to the Jews. Then he returned to Europe, and continued his work in Italy. Finally "he received from Christ the last seal," the stigmata, or marks of the crucifixion; the perforation in feet and hands, with the red blood flowing from the side out of the wound.

A marvelous life, a veritable imitation of Christ from first to last, ending in the apparent

crucifixion; yet with adjustments to the time, which made the life of St. Francis a kind of palingenesis of Christ, or re-incarnation. Strange power of that simple example in Galilee! Source of all renascence or new birth of the spirit! St. Francis lived not among Jews, but among Christians who had become, like the old Jews of Christ's time, men of form, of law, of mere intellectual subtlety. St. Francis again made Christianity a life of the spirit versus the letter. Hence his stress upon poverty; man is to renounce the world in order to win it truly. Papal Christendom with its Hierarchy had become just what Jesus had revolted against in Jewry; but the Pope accepts the new Order and does not crucify the reformer, and so the reform takes place within the Church.

The question about the stigmata is a diversified one: some people believe, some do not. But there are two opposite classes of believers, the one holding to a supernatural cause, the other to a natural cause. Cases of stigmata seem to have repeatedly occurred, and to have been examined by skeptical physicians. Psychologists have declared that the mind, in certain conditions, by brooding on the sufferings of the cross, can affect the body so as to produce these stigmata.

III. Thomas goes on to complain of the corruption already set in; the work of the founder of his order, which is the Dominican, is no

longer kept up in its purity. Its members are tempted by benefices, by power, by the ecclesiastic organism, which has always the tendency to destroy the religious life. The Roman Catholic polity, the most complete on earth, has not failed to keep this correction of itself in itself, or has sought to do so, under its wisest rulers. Very wise was this old Pope Honorius; if he had been in the papal seat at the date of Luther, who was a Dominican, the Reformation might have been kept within the Church.

*Canto Twelfth.* Plainly written as the counterpart to the preceding Canto. As St. Thomas, the greatest Dominican, has narrated the life and work of St. Francis, founder of the rival order to his own, so now St. Bonaventura, the greatest Franciscan, narrates the life and work of St. Dominic, founder of the rival order to his own. Thus rivalry is elevated into recognition and love; the individual fully recognizes his competing fellow-man, and gives to him validity — which is just the opposite of Pride, which excludes.

I. The environment, or rather the artificial symbol, the two Wheels of Saints, “the holy Mill,” begins to revolve, moving and singing. What does this mean? What does it forecast or suggest? A movement of many individuals — here writers, literary men, mostly theologians — in a cycle; each has his place and is active, the whole making a totality of a process. Then there are

two such cycles, or as many more as you may imagine; not simply one and no more. Finally these two cycles form a higher unity, are in harmony, moving and singing together. Nor must we forget the illumination common to all the Heavens.

II. St. Bonaventura begins to speak and tells of St. Dominic, the founder of the Dominicans. The twofoldness of the orders, their difference yet their oneness, like the image of the Holy Mill, is the fact stated here again, as it was by St. Thomas in the last Canto—the primal cause of both being “the Emperor who eternally rules.” Dominic was a Spaniard, next he was a great doctor; he was married to the Creed as St. Francis was to Poverty. Finally and chiefly he was the grand heresy hunter, “his attack smote the heretic stocks,” whereby “the catholic garden is well watered” and puts on a wonderful bloom.

Very different is such a life from that of St. Francis. Little imitation of Christ in it, no re-incarnation of love, rather hate, theologic hate, and the worst form of it, that of the heresy-hunter, narrow, cruel, rigidly judging by doctrine, and slaying all who do not agree. Just opposite to the spirit of Christ, who sought to break the chains of the old Law and call forth liberty; opposite to St. Francis, who inside the Church sought to break the slavery of Form and the Law. Very justly a Spaniard, that people to

whom the Inquisition specially belongs, and which afterward produced a Loyola alongside of Dominic.

It will be seen that St. Dominic is not to our taste; if we had to become a monk, we would choose St. Francis as our guide. We almost think that Bonaventura had not altogether a congenial task in making this encomium.. Not as good as that on St. Francis in the preceding Canto by St. Thomas.

Still we must grant that St. Dominic has his important place in history and in civilization; particularly in the Church there must be a Dominic and his order. The law cannot be abolished, the dogma is a necessity, the ritual is not mere mummary or ought not to be. In that wild medieval time some unity of doctrine and discipline must be maintained, else not only the Church but all Europe will explode into a thousand warring sects. Strong must be the hand, and not too tender, to hold Christendom together; Dominic had his work to do, and did it. So we may accept Dante's place for him in Heaven, with no special longing for the same.

III. Bonaventura at last turns to his own order and gives it a castigation. Two tendencies have set in — greater laxity and greater rigidity, the one leaning to dissolution, the other to extreme narrowness. Thus both orders have in themselves the seeds of dualism and dissension. Bona-

ventura was general of the Franciscans and is known as the Doctor Seraphicus, while Aquinas bears the title of Doctor Angelicus.

The second Wheel is described, with the characters in it, in parallelism with the same kind of description in the tenth Canto. No doubt the poet here has given a glimpse into his study of Theologians. Especially is this the case in regard to Aquinas and Bonaventura, who were counterparts in Dante's religious development, quite as they stand here. Their common influence upon his Purgatorio has already been indicated (see p. 195).

*Canto Thirteenth.* The two Wheels again whirl and sing—twenty-four stars; the subject of the song is “three Persons in divine nature,” the Trinity, certainly the great theologic theme, “and that divine nature and the human in one person”—Christ, the God-Man. Such are the two principal subjects of Theology, here sung, as we often find them in the medieval Latin Hymn. It is not exactly clear how these Wheels revolve in relation to each other—parallel, in opposite movement, or one behind the other? A dark expression is the chief light: *Che l'uno andasse al prima e l'altro al poi*. Any one of the three ways will answer; the thought of the opposite movement of the two Circles is the most acceptable to us, suggesting the greatest diversity in the deepest harmony.

St. Thomas again begins speaking in response to a doubt of Dante, who is troubled about the statement "that the good which is enclosed in the fifth light (Solomon) had no second." This statement seems to place that dubious old Hebrew King, about whose salvation there was a question in the minds of the Schoolmen, above Adam and Christ, the two race-men, perfect in mind and body, having come directly from the Creator, and not indirectly through human generation and corruption. Whereat Theology, in the mouth of St. Thomas, the greatest expounder thereof, has to straighten the matter out with some wriggling, as it seems to us.

The answer of St. Thomas still declares that those two supreme race-men, Adam and Christ, sprung directly of the Divine Act, were wiser and more perfect than Solomon born of woman, who was simply the wisest of Kings, not of all men. And the word *arose*, used previously in speaking of Solomon, applies only to Kings, according to Dante. Very, very doubtful is such argumentation; the great difficulty, which seems to throw a shadow upon Adam and Christ, is solved by a verbal distinction.

The subject leads the poet to give another statement of the creative process from God down. The Divine Idea rays itself out into entities — angels, man, nature — becoming less and less perfect because of the inadequate material: "the

wax and that which stamps are not of one mode." So the primal Energy, working through the Movers in the Stars (the nine Orders), "descends downward from act to act," till at last it produces only "brief contingences," very transitory and accidental matters. But in the case of Adam and Christ, God, or rather the Trinity, wrought immediately, producing both the material and the spirit.

Thus it will be seen that St. Thomas goes back to creation and formulates it as originating from the Trinity. The One-and-Three is self-separating, yet self-returning; it differentiates itself into the nine substances (or Heavens), the source of individuation; yet from this it goes back to unity. The descent is from the perfect to the imperfect — Adam and Christ being the perfect, directly created by God. Through Adam, who is free-will, sin came into the world, for free-will can choose to follow God or not to follow him. The Mythus of sin goes back to Adam, back to the Devil, back to God. Then it goes forward from Adam to the sons of Adam, or mankind, to Christ the son of God. Adam, or the first created man is thus the pivot of the grand Sin-Mythus, which St. Thomas is seeking to interpret, and which sweeps backwards and forwards in time and in thought. Through God alone man is created and lost; through the Son man is re-created (born again) and is saved;



thus the cycle is completed. Still further, they, Father and Son, are one in the Spirit, which is the third different from both, yet one with them and making them one. For the Father sent his own Son to save man, and thus shows love; the Son fulfills the mission and thus too shows love. Herein the two are One, and this Third One is the Holy Ghost, the unifier of the divine dualism, which without it would remain twofold.

Theology thus is inclined to posit this Trinity from the beginning, hence it created the world. But thereby development seems to be ingored. The perfect God is at the start, the Son is also on hand, yet his incarnation is in time. Still we may conceive all this to be simply the ideal process of the world, as it was conceived by the Theologian, seeking to establish the Hebrew mythical statement by means of metaphysical ratiocination.

The psychological state of the author, while writing this Canto, is to us something of a puzzle. Did he believe his own subtleties in regard to Solomon? Or is he secretly ironical? He seems at least to have suspected the soundness of his method, for toward the end of the Canto, he enters upon a diatribe, somewhat passionate, against "the man, very low among fools, who affirms or denies without distinction." True enough; but why just here and with so much heat? Possibly there is a commingling at

this point of two Dantes, both of whom we have seen before in this poem.

First is Dante the analyser, the hair-splitter, the sophisticator, trying with all his might to make rational something which he wants to believe but cannot fully. He throws all his genius into reflective subtleties, and defends himself by calling those people fools "who affirm or deny without distinction." Meanwhile he goes on defining and refining till nothing is left but thought-dust, which one is inclined to fling away as so much dirt. He damns those "who fish for truth without art," that is, without the scholastic logical process. So certain ancient philosophers here named; so Sabellius and Arius, both of them heretics in regard to the Trinity, inasmuch they did not make the right distinctions.

In all this far-fetched play of ingenuities there is another Dante peeping forth and then hiding himself. He puts these subtleties into the mouth of St. Thomas, the latter being the mighty definer and logician in Theology. Does the poet not drive the great Theologian here upon his limitations, after having done him justice within his realm? Certainly St. Thomas appears ridiculous in the Solomon argument, and then is made to defend the method with some warmth. We may well grant that Dante had no such intention; but something deeper than his conscious purpose drives the poet, and often causes him to do far

better than he intended to do. At any rate in his last words here St. Thomas seems unconsciously humorous; the great defender of Faith enjoins upon all a skeptical turn of mind in regard to judgments: "Let not the people be too secure in judging."

Repeatedly in the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* we have detected Dante in a secret protest against certain theological doctrines of his time; in the present instance the great Theologian himself, whom Dante deeply studied and loved, yet whose limits he must have often felt, passes off the stage in a manner which chalks off his character, revealing the bounds of himself and of his subject.

*Canto Fourteenth.* The matter of this Canto falls into two main divisions: questions concerning the glorified body, and the transition to Mars.

I. We must imagine Aquinas speaking from the circumference of the Wheel, and Beatrice beginning to speak from the center of the same, when two waves of sound from opposite directions are produced "like water moving in a round vessel according as it is struck within or without." Between the angelic Doctor and the saintly Lady the poet marks "the similitude," though one speaks from the outside (logic, intellect) and the other from the inside (heart, spirit) of the great Wheel of Light. Both meet and become one in the Truth.

The questions concerning the glorified body are

two: (1) Will the light "with which your substance enflowers itself" at present, remain eternal, that is, after the resurrection? (2) If so how will the body be visible "without hurting you," who are to behold it? The inquiry is concerning the manner in which the soul after death will resume its form that it may be recognized by others.

To Beatrice uttering these questions, which are really Dante's inner thoughts, from the center where she stands, there is given a grand response from the surrounding Wheels which flash in joy, and whirl, and sing in a magnificent display of light, music, motion and voice. The song celebrates the Trinity which lives and rules forever — "not circumscribed," and yet "it circumscribes all" — the central thought of Christian Theology and of this Heaven of the Sun. So all the Theologians of the two Wheels (and perhaps more) strike this fundamental note. Such is now the attunement wherein Love is manifested, which is the unifying principle of the Trinity.

At this point, then, one of the souls of the lesser circle, usually supposed to be Solomon, begins speaking and declares: "As long as this festival of Paradise shall last, so long our Love will clothe itself in such a garment of radiance." The movement is given in a series: brightness, ardor, vision, grace. When we get back our bodies, we shall be more acceptable and give out

more light, "as a coal aglow surpasses a flame." And in response to the second question we are assured that the new glorified body will have "organs strong for all that which can delight us."

The thought of these passages is taken from the Theology of Aquinas and put into this marvelous spectacular setting of Paradise by the poet. As soon as the soul had ceased speaking, both Wheels shouted "Amen" with such fervor "that they plainly showed desire for their dead bodies." And behold a new third wheel appears outside the other two, which suggestion the poet leaves us on quitting the Heaven of the Sun.

Probably in Dante's time, the question of the glorified body had more significance to Christendom than at present. The battle over individual immortality versus Oriental absorption was still raging, and Thomas Aquinas was the grand Christian protagonist on this point against the Arabian philosophers. The soul not only persists as soul but resumes its body, individualizes itself completely in eternity, whereby it can be recognized by "mothers, fathers and other dear ones" in the world beyond. So we may consider this last discussion in the Sun as the final complete assertion of the immortality of the individual.

II. Dante again looks upon Beatrice who shows herself with new beauty, whereat the ele-

vation begins toward a higher Sphere. "I saw myself translated alone with my Lady to a more lofty salvation," a grade above the Sun. He has risen from the realm of theological speculation into that of action, which is Mars with "his fiery smile," now showing himself "more red than usual."

MARS. This is the planet of the warriors, distinguished champions of the Faith against the infidel nations. Dante was still living in the age of the Crusades, and was touched with its spirit. The grand schism in the history of the Church was that of Mahomet (see *Inf.* XXVIII.), whose followers possessed the Holy Sepulchre. The soldiers who by their deeds undertook to overcome the deepest dualism of Christendom, that between Orient and Occident, are here duly celebrated and located in Heaven. But Dante is not narrow, the old Hebrew world also belongs to the grand continuity of the Divine Order; so he puts two ancient Israelites into this Sphere along with the Christian Crusaders, that is, actual soldiers of the Cross.

Hence the impressive spectacular symbol, into which the planet quite resolves itself — the Cross. Let us note the order of the appearances: (1) The red planet Mars, which is circular. (2) Two great lines of souls are moving and flashing and singing in this Sphere; these lines meet each other at right angles, intersect and form a vast

Cross on the face of the planet, a Greek Cross apparently, in continual motion "from horn to horn and between top and bottom, sparkling mightily at the intersection." (3) The outlines of the crucified One flash from this Cross formed by the movement of the souls there. Such is the one great picture of the Whole, which contains them all, yet which they produce. Here, then, is a glimpse of the crucifixion, with its relation to the spirit of man. Such is this marvelous symbol of which Dante now has a vision in his celestial journey.

He is careful to indicate how he attains to such a view. "I made a holocaust to God," an entire sacrifice of myself, "with all my heart, and with that speech which is the same in all men." He is ready, he makes himself one with the souls here before he can truly behold them. Dante's holocaust at the start is just such a crucifixion as he sees before himself in great and in small, in Christ and in Crusader. Such is the real, inner transition from the Sun to Mars, from the thought to the act, which the poet here seeks to make his own.

Nor must we fail to note the music with its song: *Arise and conquer*; just the song of the soldier. From the entire Cross this song "gathered itself," the song of triumph over death, which is not truly cessation, but new life.

*Canto Fifteenth.* Silence comes over the singing Cross, "to give me will to pray them," the

souls who constitute that living emblem stamped on Mars. Behold now a star therein, which shoots "from the horn which extends on the right, to the foot of that Cross," like a meteor darting "through the pure and tranquil skies." It has come to Dante and speaks Latin to him, "for whom the gate of Heaven has opened twice." A speaking light, which addresses the poet "O my blood!" — what can it be!

Without doubt Dante is now the hero of a very unusual experience: he talks with his great-great-grandfather, dead some 150 years at the date of this journey. Let the reader imagine himself meeting his own ancestor of a corresponding period, what would you two talk about? But the line does stop with a given man; we must infer from the present case that we are to meet all our forefathers in the Hereafter—a procession stretching back till when and where?

One thing is certain: the hoary progenitor is proud of his descendant, and gives thanks to the Trinity, "who to my seed has shown such courtesy." Though he knows what Dante's thoughts are beforehand, seeing them reflected in the mirror of God, and even knows what he himself will answer, inasmuch as "my response is already decreed," still he wishes to hear his own blood talk, through "the sacred love in which I watch with perpetual vision." Dante has wished to speak, but his case is different from that of



these souls endowed with the divine gift of willing and doing as one; "will and utterance in mortals are diversely feathered," his power is not equal to his desire, for "I am mortal." Whereat he asks for the name of the speaker.

It is Cacciaguida, a Crusader, who went with the Emperor Conrad III. on the second Crusade (1147), and perished at the hands of the infidel. Moreover Dante's surname Alighieri is accounted for: "My wife came to me from the valley of the Po, and from her thy surname was derived." With no little noise three cities (Ferrara, Parma, and Verona) in the valley of the Po have laid claim to this remote ancestress of the poet, showing old documents which vouch for the name of the family Alighieri (the spelling varies), in their respective territories. Ferrara has apparently the first claim.

But the main thing put into the mouth of the ancient Crusader is manifestly inspired by Dante himself, the exile, being a contrast between the old and the new Florence — that new Florence which banished the poet. Then, in the time of Cacciaguida, simplicity in life ruled; no luxury, no excess, no Sardanapalus. The greatest cavalier in Florence, Bellincion Berti, could be seen, "girdled with leather and bone" — seemingly a leather jerkin with bone buttons. But the women chiefly have to take a castigation for their jewelry, for their extravagance in dressing,

for the painting of their faces (*viso dipinto*), for their disregard of domestic duties, as compared with those ancient Florentine wives. Again the commentators have thought of Dante's wife in this bitter description. In spite of Beatrice, who is now present, and other "gentle ladies," whom he has celebrated, there was a decided vein of misogyny in the poet.

*Canto Sixteenth.* This Canto has two parts, one pertaining to Dante's family, and the other to Florence, his city. Then the subject-matter in both parts is "nobility of blood," announced in the first line. Dante confesses to some pride of family, for this Cacciaguida is still the center of honor, yet the poet has to go back five generations in order to find any ancestor worthy of himself. "I boasted in heaven of it," of this nobility of blood; yet he confesses that it is "a cloak which speedily gets short unless something is added to it from day to day." Between Cacciaguida and himself he singles out no ancestor for praise. Pride of blood Dante manifests, yet he had too much pride in himself to give all the credit of himself to his forefathers. The whole Canto shows a curious play between the feeling of the haughty aristocrat and the feeling of personal worth, between self-pride and pride of birth.

Dante asks Cacciaguida to tell him four things pertaining to the olden time: (1) Who were your

ancestors; (2) What was the year of your birth; (3) How great was the number of inhabitants of Florence in your time; (4) Who were the important people, or which were the great families of the city.

The first two questions are personal and domestic, the second two are social and political in their nature.

(1) The answer to the first question is brief. The speaker simply tells the locality in the city where he and his ancestors were born. Then comes a curious sentence: "Who they were and whence they came, it is more honorable (*onesto*) to be silent about than to tell." Surely no great laudation of ancestry lies therein, whatever it means.

(2) The date of his birth Cacciaguida gives in an astronomical calculation: five hundred, fifty and thirty (or three in some texts) revolutions the planet Mars had made from the birth of Christ to his birth. Here comes trouble of the numerical kind; all of which we shall dismiss by simply giving the year 1091 as the date desired.

(3) "Those capable of bearing arms at that time were one-fifth of those at present." It is estimated that Florence had in Dante's time thirty thousand men capable of bearing arms. Six thousand, then, would be the number in Cacciaguida's time.

(4) By far the largest portion of the Canto is

devoted to a description of the old and new population of Florence, especially by families. The first complaint is about the accession of the outlying towns whereby Florence increased its inhabitants, but made the Florentine stock a mixed one, whereas in Cacciaguida's time the blood "was seen pure in the humblest artisan." Here the hidebound patrician speaks, and condemns just that policy by which Florence became a great city. The chief families are designated and the same touch of aristocratic disdain on the part of the poet runs through the whole account. The superiority of the old blood is asserted emphatically, the corruption has come through the new. "Always the confusion (commingling) of persons (of different places and conditions) was the source of evil to the city." Still its new life came of its new blood, and the energy spent in border warfare between little communities was turned mainly, though not wholly, into the channels of peace, whereby arose that wonderful commercial and intellectual development, which places Florence among the chief cities of the World's History.

Not a great Canto is this, nor does it show the poet in his greatness. In spite of himself the prejudice of the old "nobility of blood" crops out and dominates him, yet deeper than even this prejudice runs another stream of feeling: the bitterness of the exile against the city and the

people who banished him. Many a cut he gives at families who were his enemies, he makes the Crusader Cacciaguida the mouth-piece of his grudges, of which he cannot free himself in Paradise. Florence he most loved and most hated, and he is not yet done talking of her by any means.

*Canto Seventeenth.* In the present Canto the real source of the poet's condemnation of Florence appears; he has been wrongfully exiled. But how much higher is the strain of this Canto than that of the preceding one! There we saw the querulous bitter Dante, quite unable to digest his misfortune, here it is the lofty Dante who accepts his burden and draws from it true greatness of soul. The matter is cast into the form of a prophecy by Cacciaguida who foretells the bitter trials in store for his descendant.

I. As there is to be prophecy, and that too prophecy of particular events, the question comes up: How can such souls foresee? They behold all in God, "gazing at the point, in which all times are present." Really no past or future is in the divine mind, no limit of the before and after, hence no contingency, which "is all depicted in the eternal countenance." Contingency in the divine mind is not, being all-embracing, but it is in the human mind, being finite. So Cacciaguida, beholding God's mind, can foretell future events, here those of Dante's exile.

For Dante has noticed several times in the course of his journey that souls elsewhere have thrown out evil prognostications, "grave words about my future life." Now what do they mean?

II. He will have to leave all that he loves most dearly, friends, family, city. He will have to endure poverty and sacrifice personal independence — a very bitter pill to the proud Dante. Even the companions of his exile will turn against him, so that he will make a "party by himself." Such is to be his condition; one associate after another will be stripped from him till he be left alone, reduced to the mere individual, homeless, wandering, with a world burning in him. Must we not think that such a result is largely the outcome of his own temper?

Still he will find a refuge — "the courtesy of the great Lombard," Bartolommeo della Scala, Lord of Verona, to whose house he here pays grateful tribute. Then the ancestor gives the admonition, "My son, I would not have thee envious of thy neighbors (Florentines) since thy life is making for itself a future which stretches far beyond their perfidious treatment." Very needful is this advice, in which we hear the great Dante speaking to the little Dante and bidding the latter quit his animosities and assert his infinite nature. Such is the ground-tone of the present Canto in striking contrast to that of the

previous Canto. The poet there shows his limits, but here he rises out of them in manful struggle.

To this lofty piece of writing an end is given which seems literary. In the present journey to the world beyond "I have learned that which to many will be a savor of strong herbs, if I tell it again." Dante had probably heard already certain criticisms of his poem, to which he here gives answer: "If I am a timid friend to the truth, I fear to lose my life among those who will call this time ancient." He means, O reader, you and me, among others, we would not be reading Dante now, if he had been "a timid friend to the truth." How well aware is he of his immortality, and of the grounds of it! Nor can we help setting down Dante's judgment of Dante's poetry: Though it be "disagreeable at the first taste, it will leave nourishment of life behind, when it is digested." Hence the poet must name his people beyond, taking "these souls which are known to fame;" no cowardly squeamishness in his book, no mealy-mouthed terror of personalities; thus only will "the example" take strong hold of "him who hears."

Great was the advantage of exile to Dante the poet. It gave him liberty, it drove to speak the truth, it freed him from all the untold trammels and conventions of society. Exile permitted him to be personal, and gave point and intensity to

his words. Exile made him throw his poem into the future where he could give to all his enemies their dues. Exile was his providence, but he could not see it and so damned it.

*Canto Eighteenth.* Naturally after such a prophecy, there was silence on the part of the prophet and the one prophesied to; but Beatrice, the mistress of limitation, bade the poet rise out of his depressed mood: "Change thought, consider that I am near Him who unburdens every wrong." Dante, looking into her eyes "was free of every other desire." Wherein we may observe again the supreme function of Beatrice.

Yet she says here truly after a time: "Turn away and listen, my eyes are not all of Paradise." So Dante prepares to hear Cacciaguida again who shows by his flashing that he has something more to say. Other men of action are in this Heaven of Mars, whom he names: chiefly Crusaders, or those who took part in the great struggle with the Orient when it was threatening to overwhelm Europe and Christianity. But the poet is not narrowly Christian; two famous Jewish warriors are also mentioned, who preserved the divine heritage in critical periods before Christ — these are Joshua and "the high Maccabee."

Whereupon the ancestor himself moved and mingled among the other spirits, and began a song which "showed me how great an artist he



was among the singers of Heaven." A new kind of praise for the Crusader; would Dante here hint the ancestral descent of his own gift of song? At any rate a strong bond of sympathy has shown itself between the two, each being in his own way a Crusader.

JUPITER. Transition from Mars to Jupiter takes place through the aid of Beatrice, she being the one who helps over all bounds. Dante beholds her eyes again, and feels like the man who "perceives from day to day his virtue to be advancing;" so now he rises from a lower to a higher Heaven, which is the sixth.

Here too we notice a grand spectacular movement of the souls which are small lights forming letters of a sentence in Latin. *Diligite justitiam qui judicate terram* is the sentence, whose letters are, one after another, spelled out, as it were, and written down on the face of the planet in the motions of these spirits. A command from the Heavens unto mortals; yet it is also significant of the character of the people here: *Love justice, ye who judge the earth*; though written in Latin, the language of the Roman Law, it holds good in English and in every tongue.

The movement of souls culminates in the form of an eagle, the great symbol of the Empire which is to secure to man justice. The order of these appearances is: (1) The planet, Jupiter, silvery, well-tempered, well-balanced like justice.

(2) A line of souls, flitting, flashing, singing, moves through the above sentence, and inscribes it on the planet. (3) When they come to the last *M* in the word *terram*, other lights descend on the top thereof and transform it into the lily (of Florence); then still others come, "more than a thousand lights," and produce the head and neck of an eagle (the Empire); finally the rest of the blessed souls complete the shape of the bird of Jupiter.

Such is the grand spectacular metamorphosis in which many a cunning signification lies hidden. But the main fact is that we have now come to realm of justice from that of war, even of Holy War; from the Church militant abroad we pass to the State pacific at home; from red Mars we rise to white Jupiter. Note too the vast co-operation of souls, which write the sentence and make the symbol; we may say, they form a social totality and organize Justice, yet each individual soul goes through the Whole, is essentially the Whole. Perhaps too we may see in this transformation scene something of the growth of Justice, starting with the love of it (*diligite*) or even the first letter thereof and rising to its highest organization in the Empire, through lower stages, especially that of Florence (the lily). An element of genesis or evolution seems to be suggested by these moving spectacular scenes passing from form to form.

Such is Justice above, but the poet cannot hold in when he turns to earth and sees the court of Rome of his own day; he hurls a Dantesque thunderbolt, sulphurous and smiting, "for the buying and selling within the Temple" — the grand violation of Justice.

*Canto Nineteenth.* The first fact now brought strongly before the reader is that the Eagle speaks, "I heard the beak talk." It was composed of many souls, of which each one flashed "like a little ruby" in its own movement or process, yet the Whole spoke as a person, a single Ego, saying "*I* and *My* in its voice." Many individuals yet one spirit and one speech: such is the thought suggested by the talking Eagle, image and even voice of the grand organization of Justice, which Dante held to be on Earth the Empire. Individuality we see asserting itself here, yet bringing forth what is universal, which in turn realizes and secures the individual.

Now what will the Eagle say to Dante? It will speak to his doubt and that doubt is in reference to Divine Justice. In the first place, is not he himself an exile, wrongfully condemned, and driven to wander, eating a stranger's bread, and going up and down another's stair? What justice in that? His own life, therefore, called forth this question. But, in the second place, the view of the political world, of Italy and of all Europe, seemed to indicate that God had quite abandoned

the task of governing the world. At the end of this Canto the poet will give a survey of European lands, from one corner to the other, from Spain in the West to Norway in the North, to Sicily in the South and to Cyprus in the East, and he will utter one grand damnation of the rulers of all Christendom, for their want of the supreme gift of the ruler, namely, Justice.

Still there is the third source of questioning God's Justice and the chief one, for it involves Christian Theology. Why are the good Heathen damned? Over and over again, directly and indirectly, consciously and unconsciously, does Dante return to this question throughout the entire *Divine Comedy*. He accepts the dogma of the Church and puts the Heathen sages into the Inferno; yet he knows it is they who have given the substantial thought of that Church on many sides, and he knows that his own culture is largely derived from them. Well does he know it and hence comes the secret protest of his soul against the orthodox doctrine, which protest we have sought to trace elsewhere (see Introduction to the *Purgatorio*, p. 35 et seq.). In the present and following Cantos he grapples with the same question more openly and more desperately than in any other part of his poem. We shall watch with care the outcome of the struggle.

For it is a struggle in Dante, perhaps his deepest struggle. Am I treated justly by God's

Justice? Are the nations of Europe really in a Divine Scheme of Justice? But, above all, is God himself, as revealed in the creed of his Church, a just God? Personally, politically, even religiously how can I find in the world as it exists a righteous Divine Order?

Now for the answer, or rather answers, since there are several. First of all, we mortals cannot fathom God's purpose. What seems and indeed is injustice at one given point which we see may be Justice in the total cycle of things which we do not see. "Every lesser (or finite) nature is a scant receptacle for that Good which has no end (infinite) and which *measures itself with itself*" (lines 49-51). Man must recognize his limitation; there is something far beyond what appears to him. Indeed it is hinted that Satan fell "through not awaiting light," he impatiently stormed against his limits instead of piously recognizing them and then patiently transcending them through harmonizing himself with the Divine. Such was the Satanic pride, or individualism.

Dante here cites "the man born on the banks of the Indus," who has never heard of Christ, "yet all his intentions and acts are good as far human reason sees," what is to be done with him? "Where is the Justice that damns him? Where is his fault if he believes not?" Dante does not try to answer these questions now; he

simply asserts the divine Goodness, and the inadequacy of man to comprehend the same.

Surely not a very satisfactory solution, not even to Dante himself, as we shall see. In this passage he strongly affirms the dogma, and never questions its limitation, for the dogma may be finite as well as man. Yet in his heart he does question it, and we begin to hear a protest in the next affirmation: "None ever ascended to this realm of Heaven who did not believe in Christ, either before or after He was nailed to the tree." Man, then, can believe in Christ before he lived and died, which fact makes Christ universal, not belonging really to Time or Place. But the dogmatic limit which puts salvation in Time, is thereby removed, and the Heathen can be saved.

In the rest of the Canto Dante takes a glance at the justice of Christendom as it is exercised politically by rulers of the true faith in his day. Damnatory in strongest degree is the account; assuredly we have to infer from it that the Christian State has failed in its first function, that of Justice.

*Canto Twentieth.* After the terrific scourging of the princes of his own time, Dante turns to give just measure of praise to princes of former ages. Appreciative he becomes, surely a better trait; but the great fact is he rises out of the pinching constraint of the dogma, and we begin

to see again the universal Dante, belonging to all times and peoples.

The good princes are placed in the eye of the Eagle; six are ranged together, two Hebrew (David and Hezekiah), two Heathen (Trajan and Ripheus), two Christian (William II. of Sicily, and Constantine). Surely this distribution is impartial, especially if we consider the eye of the Eagle to be representative of the whole Heaven of Jupiter.

At once the discussion springs up concerning the Salvation of these two Heathen, in fact they were introduced manifestly to call forth a discussion. Without baptism and without faith they were apparently; but in some way they must obtain faith and baptism. Trajan has to be first re-incarnated and then baptized after the profession of faith; the prayers of St. Gregory bring all this about. Such was the legend which Dante found ready-made for his use. But in the case of Ripheus, born before Christ, the poet makes the legend himself. Ripheus had no re-incarnation, he simply followed his light, "placed all his love below on righteousness," through which "God opened his eyes to our future redemption;" that is, he believed in Christ before Christ, and so, we must suppose, was never really lost. "The three dames," Faith, Hope, Love, "were his baptism a thousand years before there was any baptizing." He had what Aquinas calls

the baptism of Repentance, which was sufficient without the rite. Thus Christ works backward as well as forward, has indeed no limit in Time, is truly universal. Logically now all the good Heathen are saved, and saved, too, by Christ.

Or shall we consider Ripheus the solitary case of that kind in Heaven? The poet would not have us think so; he warns mortals against rash judgments in this matter, even the angels "who see God know not yet all the elect." Indeed one cannot help thinking that the cases of Ripheus and Trajan were representative, as were the Hebrew and Christian rulers in the eye of the Eagle.

Such is the present Canto, universalizing Christ, and taking into the plan of salvation the good Heaven, those existing after and before the birth of the Savior. Repentance is the adequate baptism, also universal, being the undoing of the guilty deed, true for all times and peoples. Faith is not narrowed to the Christ of a given time and place, but is of the universal Christ, working before the Christian era as well as after it. Surely Dante himself has become universal, the poet of religion not of a religion, the singer of a race, not of some fragment of mankind.

But the present Canto is the opposite of the preceding one, in which the dogmatic limit (with one brief exception) was strongly affirmed. The Eagle speaks in both cases; what is the ground of the difference between its two speeches? Is



there some progress hinted, some evolution of spirit? Note that in the present Canto the Eagle describes its own eye, that by which it sees; it speaks beholding its own vision, which must have two good Heathen in its celestial sight. In the previous Canto no eye is mentioned, the beak talks without vision seemingly, and blindly inculcates a blind faith, saying that man cannot see into God's Justice, yet must believe in the same. Surely the Eagle has no eye in the Nineteenth Canto, and hence denies eyesight to man. But in the next Canto its eye has "the highest spirits of all in their grades," which are three, Heathen, Christian, Hebrew; also the voice now speaks from the whole body, and not merely from the beak, as before; this voice utters "words such as my heart expected, on which I wrote them." It would seem that the poet intended in the two Cantos to express the strong contrast between a blind and a seeing faith in God's Justice, first through the symbolism of the eye of Eagle, and then through what the Eagle utters when it sees and when it does not see.

Still the poet will not break with the dogma; he fits the two Heathen into the Orthodox Scheme, though the Scheme gets badly cracked in the attempt. Trajan after all is made to believe and is baptized; Ripheus believed in our redemption before it took place, and from thenceforth did

not "endure the stink of paganism." Thus Rhipheus is somehow sophistieated into Heaven, and the dogma is retained. Not exactly straight-forward is this to our vision, but it was a mighty step in advance during that medieval time.

The fact is, a remnant of the old Jewish religion passed into the Christian religion; the damnation of the good Heathen is more Hebrew than Christian, and sprang from the Jewish apostles. Dante feels the limit, squirms, protests, even batters it down, then goes back into it again. Indeed Aquinas felt the same limit and works out of it through his "baptism of repentance" apparently, yet maintains it after all.

What seems to trouble Dante is predestination, and well it may. The problem stated by St. Augustine is, *Quare Deus aliquos predestinavit, aliquos improbavit, non est dare rationem nisi quod Deus voluit*. The last words of this sentence cause the trouble; God's Will is conceived as infinite caprice, he does as he pleases, and he pleases to damn some and to save others. Having eliminated the rational element out of the Divine Will and handed it over to utter arbitrariness, we cannot tell anything about its action, it is unfathomable. Moreover predestination determines the man from without; his will, his freedom is not considered; he does not make his destiny, but it is made beforehand for him by God's Will; surely no man can, then, say any-

thing about God's Will, which is wholly outside of and alien to man.

At last the poet here cries out: "O, predestination, how far removed is thy root from those views which see not the first cause as *total*." Again we think for a moment that Dante sees through predestination, and is free; for if God's Will be grasped in its totality, it is no longer capricious, but rational, no longer special but universal. "We do not yet know all the elect;" the implication is that there are many more Heathen saved than the two before mentioned.

### UPPER HEAVEN.

The third Triad is composed of Saturn, the Fixed Stars and the Primum Mobile. The movement upward is now more and more a going beyond the sensible Heaven; in Saturn is the Sacred Ladder which reaches out of sight; in the Fixed Stars is the triumph of Christ which vanishes into the invisible; in the Primum Mobile the corporeal appearance of Heaven ceases altogether, and matter passes into pure motion, or the intense struggle to get away from itself into that which is above itself.

Such, then, is the common fact in this third Triad, or Upper Heaven: the rush upward, the finite seeking to rise above its limits and reach the Infinite. Herein we may find a contrast with

the preceding Middle Heaven, which embraces the Sun, Mars and Jupiter. There the stress was rather the other way, its spirits sought, in general, to bring Heaven down to Earth, to realize the Infinite Idea in terrestrial manifestations—to explain it in Theology to the finite mind, to regain its former earthly habitation through the Crusades, to establish it in the secular institutions of Justice. In general, we may say that those lofty souls of Middle Heaven gave themselves up to finitize the Infinite, thus making it the property of humanity. They stand in the middle, and their function is essentially mediatorial.

But in this Upper Heaven the movement is in the other direction, as already indicated. The spirits here have in the main this limit upon them; they are longer turned earthward, otherworldliness is their supreme trait. It is manifest that Dante gives this Heaven a higher place spiritually than the preceding one, inasmuch as it is the rise out of the finitude of earth.

The angelic guardians over the three Spheres are the Thrones for Saturn, the Cherubim for the Fixed Stars, the Seraphim for the Primum Mobile. Very little do they seem to control; their guardianship is certainly a very silent one.

The Ladder in Saturn is the introduction to the whole Upper Heaven, and indicates the climb-

ing above, out of the Middle Heaven to the next higher one, out of the Finite toward the Infinite, reaching beyond the theologic, military and institutional manifestations which we have witnessed below.

1. If we note the common physical fact in the present Triad, we find it to be a vanishing of the visible into the invisible, from the material into the non-material. Saturn is most remote of the planets from the Earth, and nearest the Empyrean, furthest from the terrestrial and nearest to the celestial. The Fixed Stars move together in a heavenly society, as the souls alone have done hitherto; individualized they are to the last degree, yet united in one celestial company, physically by a common bond. The apparent caprice of the planets is now overcome even in the external manifestation of nature. Then in the Primum Mobile all matter has disappeared in pure motion, the visible world is fleeing from itself into the invisible. Thus in the three Spheres of the Upper Heaven, Nature herself is passing over into the beyond of herself.

2. The spectacular Symbol is employed in all these spheres to carry out the suggestion of the physical symbolism just indicated. Recollect that the spectacular Symbol is constructed by the poet and put into the planet, which has simply its own physical character for symbolic use. Both natural and artificial symbolism Dante

employs in the Paradiso, using the second to re-inforce the first.

In the present Triad all three spectacular Symbols show a going beyond — the Ladder, the Triumph of Christ and the Angelic Halos circling into the Point. Such is their common character ; indeed we can see the Empyrean suggested in all of them, and God himself is the real center of each spectacular Symbol, which points to the Total Heaven above, and which finally passes into the great White Rose of the last vision.

In these spectacular Symbols we still note a gorgeous phantasmagoric play ; they have light, motion, transformation. Then too we may observe a gradation in them ; the Ladder leads to the ether, to an invisible nothing ; but the Triumph of Christ gives a glimpse of the crucified One, though vanishing ; and the brilliant Point around which the Halos circle is the unmoved distant deity. Thus as the material Spheres go toward invisibility, vanishing finally into the pure motion of the Primum Mobile, so the divine element therein becomes more visible and permanent.

3. Besides the prominent symbolic element is a theological element, abstract, reflective. Saturn is the Sphere of contemplation, which loves to brood upon the Infinite without grasping it through the Reason. The contemplation of the Divine is meant, hence God is the unseen and

unattained in this Seventh Sphere. Contemplation, as here shown by Dante, probes into the subjectivity, or rather the caprice of deity ; God chooses to elect some and damn others, and that is the end of the matter ; we cannot fathom his purpose. Not only the Fall of Man but the Fall of the Angels is pushed back to divine predestination. Yet even God's caprice ought to be rational, hence the struggle of thought to get rid of it, which struggle gives rise to many ups and down in the soul of Dante, and for that matter, in the history of the Church. But these contemplative monks of Saturn cannot answer Dante's questions.

In the Sphere of the Fixed Stars, this vague Infinite of Contemplation takes definite shape in the vision of Christ and his Apostles, which vision, however, changes to thought in the three Christian virtues, Faith, Hope and Charity. These virtues are to become the fixed creed capable of definition ; and in this essence of the Christian creed Dante is to pass an examination before he can rise higher.

When Faith, Hope and Charity (or Love), are not only a doctrine but a habit and a life, the angelic is reached. Dante, having passed his examination, enters the Ninth Sphere, *Primum Mobile*, the Heaven of the Angels who never sinned, guardians and movers of the Spheres below.

SATURN. This is the last of the planets and the farthest from the Earth. The first form of ascent out of earthly activity is contemplation. The terrestrial forms of the Infinite in the Middle Heaven must be transcended. The secular world must be shut out of the view of Heaven; walls must be built for contemplation; Saturn is a cloister. Not the Church, which embraces the earth, but a walled-off room thereof, which looks out up the eternities.

Hence this Sphere is specially that of monastic life, which gives the freedom, and, it must be added, the food for contemplation. We had monks in the Sphere of the Sun, but we must suppose them to be rather of the active kind, ready to mingle with the world, and realize Heaven there. Here are the contemplative clerks, quite to themselves. Hence the representatives in this Sphere are two famous monks, founders of Monasteries, St. Peter Damianus and St. Benedict.

It is to be observed that Dante makes a request of each monk which he cannot fulfill. Of St. Peter Damianus the poet asks: Why art thou specially chosen by God and predestined to talk with me here? The monk confesses that he cannot answer the question; nay, it is unanswerable. Of St. Benedict Dante begs: Show yourself in your body. But this body cannot be shown here and now, in this finite Heaven.



Thus Dante runs both the monks upon their limits, they both refer above for an answer, to God and the Empyrean. Such is the boundary, apparently, of contemplation and the solution; it soon comes upon the obstacle which it cannot surmount, and points to the supernal world. Religious thought has this limit, yet must reach over it. Contemplation raises questions which it cannot answer, and can only refer them to the power above. On the Ladder are these spirits, trying climb out of their finite terrestrial conceptions.

One other fact Dante does not fail to give as the counterpart to monastic life. If it furnishes food and leaves the monk free, he may contemplate and grow thin, or he may not contemplate and grow fat. Eat and drink he must; the problem of food being solved, he can be idle and thick-waisted and heavy-dewlapped. This tendency in Monasticism is mercilessly lashed by the poet in this Sphere, so that it changes from Heaven into a kind of Inferno for the fat lazy monks who abuse their order to eat and not to contemplate. The two classes belong together — the lean cadaverous contemplative monk, and his greasy ponderous unreflective brother. Dante was a lean man and probably had a prejudice against fat men, especially in the cloister. He was of an ascetic, contemplative turn, possibly he was once a monk himself — a Minorite, for a short time.

This seventh Sphere is more briefly treated by the poet than any other of the ten. Not quite two Cantos are devoted to it. In part it seems to overlap another Sphere, that of the Sun, where we find monks among the theologians, notably Aquinas and Bonaventura, the latter of whom specially might have belonged to the mystic contemplative Sphere.

*Canto Twenty-first.* The ascent to the new Sphere, Saturn, and to the new Heaven, the Upper one, is strongly marked by the appearance of Beatrice, who dares not smile her joy upon Dante, lest he be consumed to ashes like Semele of old. Previously her smile burned (*ardeva*), but now it would burn up the mortal man, destroy utterly the material part which he has brought with him. A hint of the new power here, which overwhelms the finite, and carries it beyond. Herein Beatrice truly shows her nature which is to be this bridge across the Now to the Higher. Dante is not yet ready for the full effulgence of the Eternal, so she bids him turn away his eyes from her and fix them on the material or finite realm before them. This is Saturn.

I. We now have three phases given of the present Sphere, all of which form a gradual leading of Dante from the outside inward, from the material to the spiritual nature of the place.

(1) The physical planet has its special char-

acter. Dante in his *Convito* (II. 14) gives it two traits: slowness of movement through the Zodiac, its revolution requiring twenty-nine years and more; secondly, it is the highest of all the planets. Through these traits it suggests lofty contemplation. Observe that its name is taken from Saturnus, under whose fabled reign "all malice lay dead," man had surmounted his evil nature. Saturn was deemed a cold distant body, but now it is "under the breast of the burning Lion," which constellation imparts to the planet some of its virtue. Such is the symbolism of this Sphere taken from Nature.

(2) Then we have the artificial symbol made by the poet himself, a piece of mechanism not found in Nature. It is the Ladder running up to Heaven out of sight, "so far that my eyes could not follow it." It was of the color of gold "in which the ray shines across," transparent golden material, to be found only in heaven. It has also many rungs, indicating many grades or stages in the ascent upwards toward the Infinite beyond vision.

The original of this wonderful Ladder, which has not failed to stand erect through the World's Literature as a miraculous aid for the soul to climb heavenward, is undoubtedly found in that truest Book of Origins, ancient Genesis (XXVIII. 12), where we have a record of Jacob's dream. Angels, too, are there, showing the true angelic

office, which is to pass from Earth to Heaven, they being the messengers of God.

Possibly Dante may have seen some attempted realization of this symbol in the form of worship, for it is the function of the Church to put these transcendent ideas into visible rites and symbols for the people. Well does the writer recollect the wonder which took hold of him once, when in sauntering around Rome, he came upon the Sacred Stair, and beheld crowds ascending from step to step on their knees, repeating on each step a prayer till they came to the top, the Symbolic Heaven, and then walked down on the other side back to Earth again. Still that place is called *La Santa Scala*, the name given here by Dante to his Ladder of Paradise. Thus has that old Hebrew conception transmitted itself down into our worship to-day.

(3) Now we may take a glance at the beings on the Ladder. They are not angels in the ancient Hebrew sense, but spirits, descending, ascending, circling about "like jackdaws together at the break of day." Let the image pass, for it is Dantesque, and Dante is still Dante though he be in Heaven. One of the sparkling lights came near to the poet, and scintillated with such effulgence, that he knew it was the spirit elected to communicate with him. Thus the Sphere of Saturn gets a voice, which speaks its meaning through the word, which is the highest symbol,

above the natural or the artificial one before given, and to which we are now to listen.

II. The spirit is St. Peter Damianus, a famous monk of the tenth century, devoted to the reform of the clergy, leaning strongly to fasting, and ascetic life, and bodily torture, fighting his flesh as the incorporate Devil. Dante has two questions which the monk answers, who then of his own accord gives utterance to that of which his heart is full. Not much inclination have we to dwell upon the recorded life of this man with his self-castigations, but he belongs to a stage of consciousness that must have its season in the divine order of things.

(1) Dante asks him: Why no song here as in other Spheres? The absence of music seems to be marked by the poet. The answer is: "Thy hearing is mortal," the ear could not endure the music of this Upper Heaven. "Here is no song for the same reason that Beatrice has no smile." Therein possibly the character of Saturn is suggested, with its Ladder leading beyond the sensuous world.

But the other question is far harder: Tell me the cause which has brought just you to me here; why were you elected and predestined for this deed? The only answer is, God has so willed, and man cannot fathom God's will. Herewith comes the grand theologem of predestination, which has long troubled Christian Thought.

To answer the question the spirit makes a center of its light, "whirling itself round and round like a swift millstone." This curious symbolic act has a touch of humorous grotesqueness in it, perhaps indicating the mighty effort to grind out such a grist. St. Peter Damianus states what he sees now: "The Divine Light above me . . . joined with my vision raises me above myself so much that I see the highest essence." So the man must assert his infinite nature, be raised above himself to behold the supreme truth.

Undoubtedly there is a problem here. How the man may deem himself called to do a thing, we can understand; but why God calls just him, this individual, is indeed unknowable. Human caprice is unfathomable; how much more so is divine caprice? St. Peter Damianus was selected out of thousands; why?

This difficulty also springs up in the attempt of theology to explain the Mythus. Very beautiful and true is the Homeric procedure on this point. The man has the call within, the God is first inside; then he appears outside and commands. Ulysses is supremely the wise man, hence Pallas, the Goddess of Wisdom, appears to him and bids him act and speak. If he were not the wise man, he would not, indeed could not be chosen. So Homer would say, that St. Peter Damianus felt the call, had the divine within him-

self, then he was chosen and must be chosen, and there is no mystery in his election. But if he were chosen out of millions from the outside by deity, what have we but God's Will, not as necessary, universal, and rational, but as capricious purely, which Will cannot be predicted or understood? Again we must think that the mythical view of God is truer than the theological in this regard.

The monk, however, runs the matter back to an arbitrary choice, predestination, on God's part, which is an attempt to recognize God not as rational and universal, but as capricious and individual. If man be necessitated, then God is capricious. But the true insight is to see man as free, and God as willing man's freedom. Thus the Will of God is supremely to will man's freedom, and that is too God's freedom, but no longer his almighty caprice. Note again the definition: God as Will is the Will which wills Free-Will. In Him there is no inner caprice, no outer necessity; he is supremely Freedom.

(2) The soul tells who he is and describes his scene of work when he lived as a monk. But he lets out his heart when he speaks of the monks and the clergy. They have now become so "heavy that they need somebody to prop them before and behind, and somebody to lead them." That is the vice of the cloister, fat idleness, instead of lean contemplation. "They cover

their palfreys with their mantles, so that two beasts go under one skin." Such is the Saint's sarcasm in Heaven.

But note the response to these words of the Saint. The flamelets or spirits from step to step of the Ladder "descend and whirl themselves and every gyration made them more beautiful." But listen as they gather round the speech-maker, St. Peter Damianus! They stopped and gave such an awful howl (*grido*) that "nothing on earth could be compared to it." Dante did not understand it, "the thunder of it so overcame me." No mortal populace listening to their favorite speaker ever set up such a howl. Here Dante is grotesque; giving the negative, he becomes infernal, and these celestial spirits are seen for a moment in a demonic fit.

*Canto Twenty-Second.* Dante turns to Beatrice that she explain this howl, which he naturally deems to be of devils. But she addresses him reprovingly: "Knowest thou not that thou art in Heaven?" For what he had just heard made him think of Hell. She goes on to explain that the howl was really a prayer of the Saints for vengeance against the corrupt clergy. A needful explanation for Dante and for his reader too, who would not naturally think of prayer on hearing such a sound. Then Beatrice again bids the poet to turn away from her to behold "the illustrious spirits" who now appear "as a hundred spherules



which together made themselves more beautiful with mutual rays."

I. At this point one is selected to speak with Dante, or selects himself. It is St. Benedict, the founder of the monastic order of Bénédictines, 6th century A. D. He made Monte Cassino a point of light for the surrounding country, first converting it from Heathenism; then it became a torch for the whole world. Benedict is truly one of the heroes of human advancement; well may he be honored to-day. He was in a terrific fight with the world, the flesh and the Devil, like all monks; but he made a great light and imparted it through the generations down to the present. The traveler in Italy still goes to Monte Cassino, he toils up and around the mountain to its summit where is the cloister; he may well think of Dante's Purgatorial Mountain, and even of this Ladder of Saturn with its monks ascending and descending. Another monk here mentioned, St. Romuald, founder of the monastery of Camaldoli, is said to have had the vision of the Ladder, with monks in white ascending and descending, instead of Jacob's Hebrew angels.

Dante asks to "see thee with uncovered form," to see St. Benedict, not as a spherule of light but as a human appearance. Why just him, here and now? Some caprice of Dante's, unfathomable; perhaps the poet thinks that now in the Upper Heaven the spirit may take on its

glorified body. Not in this Sphere, replies St. Benedict, which has still its finite side; not till the last Sphere, the Empyrean, the home of the Infinite; "there every desire is perfect, mature, entire," and will be fulfilled; it is the universal Sphere, in which alone "every part is there where it always was." Wonderful Sphere, which "is not in Space" but beyond; "our Ladder here leads up to it," leads out of Space and Time and Finitude, and hence its top "is stolen from thy vision." So we shall have to wait to behold there the total man re-assume his shape. Thus it seems that the absence of body is an inadequate or finite phase of the nine lower Spheres. But St. Benedict, the grand idealist, has here given us the promise of what hereafter we shall behold.

With this marvelous lofty glance up toward the Empyrean, the Saint suddenly turns and looks down to the earth, at his brethren of the cloister; in a moment he darkens, and his words grow bitter, sarcastic, damnatory. Mightily he scourges monastic corruption: "the walls of the monastery are made caves," dens of thieves or low doggeries, and "the monks' cowls are sacks of spoilt flour." A touch of the demonic is here, a castigation such as the sinners of the Inferno receive sometimes. Temper is not wanting, for these are Dante's own utterances concerning his time.

Then the Saint returned to his "college" or group, and this group closed up; off it goes like the whirlwind. Note again the association of these spirits; not as mere individuals are they shown; there must be association in Heaven.

II. The transition to the next Sphere is now given—to the Fixed Stars, at the sign of the Twins. Here we have a touch of Dante's astrological belief, for from these stars "I recognize all my wit to come," inasmuch as "I was born under you;" indeed, this sign of Gemini was that of learned men, poets, and prophets, says Philalethes. Only a far-off influence is it, however, not enough to destroy free-will, as the poet elsewhere sets forth.

Now comes the looking backward before going forward. Very necessary indeed; so the wise Beatrice insists that, in order to have "his eyes clear and acute," he must glance behind and note what he has passed through. He beholds the seven Spheres and this terrestrial globe at whose "vile look I smiled." A survey it is of the individual heavenly bodies, the planets, ere he turns to the fixed ones in a vast group or line moving together through the sky. Surely a new outlook from the Upper Heaven; one glance more at this little terrestrial "threshing-floor," whose grain has to be flailed and cudgeled to separate it from the chaff; "then I turned my eyes to the beautiful eyes of Beatrice."

Out of the sphere of Saturn we have passed, in which, however, we may note certain peculiarities of treatment. The poet gives to it fewest words; no smile of Beatrice, no song of the saints, lest it destroy him here; no questions answered really, but they are called unfathomable; terrific demonic denunciation of monks by monks, giving an infernal tinge to the quiet contemplative cloister. The Ladder reaches out to the Empyrean, not simply to the Fixed Stars; Dante does not go up the Ladder, that is for the spirits.

THE FIXED STARS. Dante in his *Convito* (II. 15) has given at some length the symbolic suggestion of the Starry Heaven, comparing it to Physics and to Metaphysics, or the science of things visible and the science of things invisible. Both characteristics he traces in this Sphere, wherein we may note the germ of his treatment here, as well as the ground of his placing it in the Third or Upper Heaven, which has everywhere this rise from the sensible or finite to the supersensible or infinite.

We must note, too, that now the stars move together, yet remain fixed in their relation to one another. On the other hand, the planets are individual and wander about; thus they may be supposed to represent that phase of caprice or individualism which the great fight is made against. But the Fixed Stars move in a society

as it were, all with a common thought or unity, and may suggest the common moving principle of humanity.

The subject-matter of this Sphere is specially Christ, who is presented in various aspects, of which we note the three leading ones.

I. He is first presented to the imagination in the form of a colossal spectacular view sweeping upwards to the Empyrean. This is called his Triumph, and passes through several stages.

II. The second aspect of Christ here presented is for the Understanding in the form of the three abstract virtues, Faith, Hope, Love, which Theology has deduced from the Gospels, that is, from the life of Christ. Thus we have in these two aspects the mythical and the reflective, or the Symbol and the essential meaning of the Symbol.

III. Then comes the third aspect, the man in contrast with Christ, namely Adam. Already the poet has often brought these two types of humanity together, world-men we have called them, inasmuch as every man belongs to one or the other as a whole, yet in part to both. Thus the cycle is made complete in the two careers, the one being the Fall, and the other the Restoration. Wherewith the eighth Sphere, whose content is the Christ-idea, is brought to a conclusion.

Of these three aspects of the Christ, the sec-

ond, which pertains to the celestial virtues, is most strongly emphasized by the poet, evidently under the influence of Aquinas. Throughout the *Divine Comedy* these virtues are deemed Christian in contrast with the four Heathen virtues which are secular and have as their content the terrestrial relations of life. But Faith, Hope and Love have God as their content or end, and the celestial (supersensible, universal) relations of the individual. The three attitudes of man towards God they formulate and seek thereby to present more distinctly to the understanding.

(1) Faith is the foundation, being man's belief in God, and in a Divine Order, his intellectual acceptance thereof. There are many finite kinds of faith, but divine Faith has just the Divine for its content.

(2) Hope is Faith with an addition; man believes, when he hopes, that he personally is included in the Divine Order, that he will be saved. But he must do works meet for salvation, must be conscious of the good deed. Hence Hope requires the activity of the Will as well as of the Intellect.

(3) Love is also of many finite kinds, but celestial Love must have God as its content or object. Man must love the Divine, and not simply see it or believe in it as something actual; and, as Aquinas argues, he must love it for its

own sake and not for the sake of something else; he is not to love God through the advantage thereof or through terror.

This Love (or Charity) is the highest of all the virtues and includes them all. It transforms the man into the true image of God himself, who is the Good. Every person who is really endowed with celestial Love becomes a second Providence to the world about him. Thus his Love of God specially manifests itself in the love and providential care of his fellow-man. Such a person within his sphere of influence makes his soul an image of the Divine Order, and realizes the same, through Love.

The great poets of the world have not failed to show this trait as the culmination of all human character. This celestial Love is the transfigured relation of Beatrice to Dante. Shakespeare, in his great female characters, touches the same height; twice he does so in his male characters, namely in Prospero and in Kent. Goethe portrays the same trait in Margaret, both on earth and in heaven; and he has given us glimpses of this divine Love in the Abbé of *Wilhelm Meister*.

*Canto Twenty-Third.* This is the grand spectacular Canto in the Sphere of the Fixed Stars. As we read it, the main points are, first, what Dante cannot behold (1-70), and, secondly, what he can behold.

I. Beatrice, looking above, calls to him: "Witness the Triumph of Christ." He looks, but his gaze "endured it not." He breaks down in this attempt to see the Divine as manifested in the Incarnation. Meanwhile Beatrice bids him to look on her: "Thou art now grown able to endure my smile." So this first failure to see "the lucent Substance," has helped him to see her smile, which he could not look upon below in Saturn.

Not yet ready is Dante to behold the highest Truth, which is to be revealed in its fullness in the Empyrean; still, here already he catches a dazzling glimpse, which is a necessary preparation. This celestial spectacle we observe to be a brief partial vision of what is to be seen above in the Total Heaven, and is prophetic of the end of the journey.

In the first part of the Canto, the movement of Dante is threefold: (1) he looks at Beatrice who is gazing upward with longing; (2) she turns him away from herself and bids him look at the Triumph of Christ; (3) he is dazzled and put down, still he has gained in strength, for he can now behold her smile. Note again the function of Beatrice.

II. Now we are to be informed concerning what Dante can see. He has had a glimpse of the grand triumph of the Son of Man, which is a triumph over the flesh, over the weakness of



humanity. Beatrice bids him again to turn away from herself and to behold the great reality. He witnesses the same procession, but Christ has vanished.

Dante now beholds the Mother, Mary, not the Son, but the mortal parent of Him; upon her Dante can gaze. Also the Apostles remain, who were His companions and successors; thus the immediate human environment before and after Him is witnessed in the present Sphere. Still the light from above is shining, as it were, through a rift in the clouds. Here another wonderful spectacle is seen, the crowning of the Virgin by the Angel Gabriel, re-enacting the Annunciation. Whereat this second phase of the Triumph vanishes above, following the Son toward the Empyrean. Song too is heard, which Dante could not endure below in Saturn, being still too much in the flesh. Like the Ladder in Saturn, the Triumph passes out of sight. But the one is a mechanical contrivance, the other is a living movement, reaching from the visible to the invisible.

In each of the three Triads, the middle Sphere is specially devoted to the crucifixion. In Mercury of the first Triad there was a theological discussion of it; in Mars of the second Triad was a gleam of the crucifix with the dead Christ; in the Fixed Stars here of the third Triad is the Triumph of the living Christ. Such is, we may well think, one of the homologies of the Paradiso.

The Apostles remain after the Son and the Mother have vanished beyond, and in the following Cantos examine Dante on the three Christian virtues, Faith, Hope, and Love, which have already so often appeared in the course of the *Divine Comedy*. The reader naturally asks what is the connection between the spectacle just witnessed and these virtues? We pass from the concrete to the abstract, from vision to doctrine, from the Symbol to the essential meaning. The Triumph of Christ really signifies these virtues; man worshiping the one must live the other. So Dante, if he truly beholds Christ's triumph over the world, the flesh and the devil, must possess Faith, Hope, and Love. Note that the abstract doctrine comes after and out of the imaged event; thus the creed is theologized from the Mythos, here by the Apostles themselves.

What have these three virtues in common? They are three phases of one thing, the Divine in man; we may call them three forms of the spirit's victory over finitude, hence of Christ's Triumph.

*Canto Twenty-Fourth.* Beatrice, noting Dante's limits, intercedes for him with the Apostles, that they may give him to drink of their fountain. Marvelous is their assent, by means of flaming gyrations; finally one of them specially manifests himself by whirling and singing and speaking; it is St. Peter, who examines Dante upon Faith.

(1) What is Faith? The answer is the well-known one of the Epistle to the Hebrews (XI. 1): "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the argument of things not appearing" (translation according to the Latin Vulgate, Dante's Bible). Furthermore there is a theological interpretation of the passage after Aquinas. The general purport is that Faith pertains to the Invisible, to God.

(2) Dost thou possess it? An emphatic yes is the answer.

(3) Whence comes it? The answer is, from the Old and New Testaments, the word of God, supported by miracles.

(4) What is the object or content of Faith? "God sole and eternal, the Mover not moved;" also "the Three Persons in one Essence:" all of whom must now be believed in, but will hereafter be seen, face to face, in the Emyrean.

Very theological is this; first it was theologized from the life of Christ by the author of the Epistle above cited, then the whole was theologized over again by the Fathers, from whom Dante has received it. But who can gainsay the necessity and value of such a formulation?

*Canto Twenty-Fifth.* The leading fact of the present Canto is that Dante is examined on Hope by St. James. The questions are asked in the same order here as in the last Canto.

(1) What is Hope? The definition given is

translated directly from Peter Lombard, one of whose sentences runs: *Est enim Spes certa expectatio futurae beatitudinis veniens ex Dei gratia et meritis præcedentibus.*

(2) It is strongly affirmed by Beatrice that Dante possesses this Hope.

(3) Also the statement is made that it is derived from the Old and New Testaments, to each of which there is a reference.

(4) The object or content of Hope is future blessedness, and all that this implies, for instance, the resurrection.

If Faith is an act of the intellect, which affirms that there is a Divine Order, Hope believes that the individual will be saved in that Divine Order. The two are correlates, two strong feelings or convictions; the one relating to the existence of God, the other to the salvation of man.

*Canto Twenty-Sixth.* In the present Canto there are two main portions, of which St. John and Adam are the central figures.

I. St. John examines Dante concerning Love, the third celestial virtue. This examination proceeds in a somewhat different manner from the two others preceding it; the first purpose is to find the object or content of Love. This is the Good, which "so kindles Love," and the Supreme Good is God himself. The chief incitements to love God are both Reason and Revelation.

Not very explicit is this brief treatise on Love,

which Dante possibly abbreviates here as he has so often spoken of it elsewhere in his poem. Really it is the universal virtue, which makes man into the image of what he loves, makes him a Providence.

II. Adam, the primal world-man repeatedly placed by Dante in contrast with Christ, the second world-man, is now introduced to answer certain questions: (1) How many years since my creation; (2) How long did I remain in Paradise; (3) What was the nature of my sin; (4) What was the language I spoke? Thus the Mythos of Paradise lost is connected with Paradise regained; wherewith the Canto ends.

*Canto Twenty-Seventh.* This is a Canto of transition, with two main divisions. In it also are the sharpest contrasts of Dante's spirit, ranging from the Celestial down to the Infernal, from Love to Wrath, in fact from Hope to Despair. The two sides of the poet's soul, the divine and the diabolic, are still in a mighty irreconcilable tension.

I. The first division is, in general, the passage heavenward to the Empyrean of the triumphal procession of Christ, which procession was the grand spectacular symbol of the Eighth Sphere, now vanishing. It sings its chant to the Trinity, the deepest note of the Paradiso, to which note everything here is attuned. Joy is boundless; "that which I beheld seemed to me the smile of the

Universe." Then a prodigious transformation of this whole world, turning to fiery indignation; the four Virtues, St. Peter, Beatrice, all the sky turn red with wrath, which is voiced by St. Peter himself, fulminating against his successor at Rome. Avaricious, causers of division among Christians, "ravenous wolves" have these shepherds of Christendom become, as seen from Heaven by the first Shepherd. Whereupon follows the great injunction to Dante: "My son, open thy mouth when thou returnest below, and hide not what I do not hide from thee."

Thus the procession of souls passes on, innumerable, "like snow flakes whirling downward through our atmosphere;" only these move upwards, triumphing. Dante now loses sight of them and Beatrice calls his attention to another fact: "Look how thou hast revolved."

Again a glance backwards at the Earth, and a noting of what has been passed through; Dante is now beyond the Sun, he is in the Zodiac, and is also going beyond it, out of the Visible into the Invisible. At this height he has been whirled through what corresponds to one-fourth of the globe's periphery, according to plausible astronomical calculation. This looking backwards and downwards is quite the opposite of the purgatorial glance, which is a looking forwards and upwards, just to what now lies behind, and is a conquered territory. Still

Dante can see this Earth, and on it Europe or Christendom, with its two mythical limits eastward and westward: "the shore on which Europa became a sweet burden" (Phœnicia) and "the mad track of Ulysses" (beyond Cadiz or Spain.)

II. PRIMUM MOBILE. This is the Ninth Sphere, called the Crystalline Heaven, not interrupted by the material forms of celestial bodies; motion it has the swiftest, conceived as immaterial, abstracted somehow from matter. Yet this pure motion must, after all, be corporeal in itself; it is Time seeking to get rid of Time, it is Space trying to overcome Space, and yet remaining spatial; it is Matter canceled outwardly, yet inwardly to the spirit still material.

1. It is, therefore, a realm of transition, of unrest, of absolute want of fixity; a half-way world between the Visible and Invisible, partaking strangely of both; a very embodiment of the grand contradiction between Matter and Spirit. When it is held fast as the one, it at once becomes the other; which other turns back again when held fast as the one. Such is the corporeal environment here, which is, however, incorporeal, viz., pure motion.

2. The next is the spectacular symbol, which is a Point of piercing brightness surrounded by nine successive Halos—the nine Orders of Angels circling about Deity, the Point above

Space and Time, yet here manifested still in the same. The swiftness of the Angels is the flight to reach that Point, the effort to overcome all outwardness or alienation and to attain true internality or self-determination.

3. Like the other celestial symbols, this shows a process, a movement toward the Highest, the Divine. The Halo nearest to the Point is the swiftest, thus contradicting directly the Visible and the Sensible, yet suggesting just therein the spiritual fact. Hence these Halos of Angels are moved by their end and toward their end, but they too are movers of the celestial Spheres below, which are also seeking to overcome their outer-ness and to reach the Point. The Ninth Sphere with its Angels brings about the mediation of Matter with Spirit; truly an angelic function.

Beatrice has already smiled on Dante so that he has risen out of the preceding Sphere, but now she speaks and gives a few hints about this *Primum Mobile*. "The nature of the World," or the totality of the physical Universe has here reached its goal (*meta*). The source of planetary motion is the Ninth Sphere, but the source of the latter's motion is the Empyrean, which surrounds the same with Light and Love (line 112). There the conception of all matter passes into that of pure motion, which again is the flight of the corporeal into spiritual.

Having thus glanced back and made the transi-



tion, Beatrice takes a moral retrospect of terrestrial matters. She is exceedingly severe, indulging in a bitter denunciation which seems to be without faith, hope, or charity. Still the man is Dante, and cannot help himself; here in the Ninth Heaven he gives way to a demonic outburst, which has in it a damnation which belongs to the Inferno.

*Canto Twenty-Eighth.* This Canto contains the special unfolding of the angelic Hierarchies whose Sphere is the Primum Mobile. It is to be noticed that these angels are not the souls of mortals, which we have seen in the other Spheres, but a new order of beings, standing between God and Man. The Canto first gives the appearance, or symbolic image; then it describes the Orders corresponding to the image.

I. These phases of the symbolic manifestation of the present Sphere are brought before us in a kind of spectacular movement. (1) Dante first beholds the grand image in the eyes of Beatrice — “she who imparadises my mind” — that is, she elevates it to Paradise, to the Infinite, above its finite self; wherein again we may catch a hint of Beatrice’s true function. (2) Then he turns and sees the image directly, with its vivid Point of light and nine surrounding Halos; “and each Halo moved more slowly according as it was further away from the Point.” Thus all Space is canceled into a Point, and that Point is illumin-

ated, and the nearest Halo to it is swiftest. (3) This is the reverse of what we see in the sensible world, in which "the revolutions are more divine," that is, swifter, in proportion as they are removed from the center. But, "in this angelic temple" Love and Light are the only boundaries.

Such is the spectacle now witnessed in the *Primum Mobile*. Note this vivid point of light; it will yet expand in the *Empyrean*, of which it seems a distant harbinger. The poet strongly emphasizes its being a point: the smallest star would seem a moon if put alongside of it "as star is placed with star."

Thus we are to rise beyond the sensible, even in the world of sense. The Copernican theory demands the same elevation above external appearances; the Sun seems to move around the Earth, yet the reverse is the fact; thus we have to conceive a spiritual center of the physical Universe, ere we can understand it aright. There is a prophetic element in this strange vision of Dante, which beholds the rise above the sensuous appearance, even in natural science, into the spirit's view.

II. Great was the flashing and sparkling of the Halos in response to the words of Beatrice; every spark was a delighted angel, and the Halos kept turning around the brilliant Point. Their song arose, "hosanna from choir to choir until

it reached the fixed Point which holds them," surely a most wonderful spectacle. But now what are these Halos?

They are nine Orders of angels, already often alluded to, here gathered into their particular Sphere. Yet they also belong above in the Empyrean, of which the Primum Mobile with its one brilliant Point and circling Halos of angels is a far off reflection. In like manner we find the particular soul below in its Sphere, yet also above in the universal Sphere, the Empyrean. The angel, as well as the soul, is both local and general, finite and infinite, particular and universal; and this double nature of it must be set forth by a double image in the celestial world.

We should also observe that the poet divides the nine Orders into three Triads, which fact is important as it helps us organize the whole Paradiso. For the nine Spheres are also to be thrown into three Triads, each of which has its own special character. Accordingly this division into Triads marks the division into Lower, Middle and Upper Heaven, each of which again has three Spheres. This play with the number three is Dante's delight, and runs through the *Divine Comedy*; especially is it noticeable in the Paradiso, and suggests the key-note of the Cantica, namely the Trinity.

The next question is, What is the distinction

between these three Triads of angels? Dante says little about it, though it is in his mind, inasmuch as Aquinas elaborates it quite fully. The following passage upon this subject may, therefore, be welcome to the student: "The first and highest Hierarchy or Triad — Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones — know things in the first universal cause which is God himself. The second Hierarchy or Triad — Dominations, Virtues, Powers — know things in their universal created causes, in which a certain multiplicity is observed. The third Hierarchy or Triad — Principalities, Archangels, Angels — know things in the application of those universal causes to the particular case, which is thus seen to depend on a special cause." (*Philalethes ad Par. XXVIII*, after Aquinas.)

Still all these angels have a common kind of knowing as distinct from mortal knowing. The human soul receives its divine illumination through sensuous images, the angels receive theirs through pure intellectual intuition. (See Dr. Harris' work on *The Spiritual Sense of Dante's Divine Comedy*, p. 157-62 where the nature of angelic knowing is fully set forth.)

By no means does Dante draw out the differences between the separate Orders of each Triad. Undoubtedly the Seraphim are the highest order through Contemplation, the Cherubim are next through Love. "Blessedness is founded on the

act which sees, not on that which loves, for this comes after" (lines 109-111); wherein the poet follows Aquinas: *Essentia beatitudinis in actu intellectus constitit*, and this intellectual act culminates in the vision of God (*in visione divinæ essentiæ*). Moreover here is the point at which the intellect, the ever-striving, limit-transcending faculty of man, gets quiet (*si queta ogni intelletto*, l. 108), having a content adequate unto itself, namely, an infinite one. Again a tinge of quietism, of Pantheistic repose, alien to Christian thought; but a strong undercurrent of Oriental feeling and speculation runs through all these later Cantos of the Paradiso, in contrast with the Christian idea, which always insists upon the eternally active process.

In the final part of the Canto the poet gives a short history of the Angelic Hierarchy. It is a Mythos and shows a mythical development in time. Dante ascribes the whole matter to Dionysius the Areopagite, whose supposed book was a great authority during the Middle Ages. But Dionysius, the associate of St. Paul, never wrote the book, which is not earlier than the fifth century of the Christian Era. The true original source is doubtless to be found in certain passages of St. Paul's Epistles. (See *Rom. VIII. 38*, for *angels, principalities and powers*; see also *Eph. I. 21*, for *principality, power, virtue, dominion*; also *Col. I. 16*, which adds *thrones* to the preced-

ing.) Out of ancient Hebrew legend were extracted Seraphim, Cherubim, Archangels, and angels in general.

Such are the mythical sources of Dante's Angelic Hierarchy, growing, developing, till they were organized into a system by the book ascribed to Dionysius, to whom Gregory the Great is to be added. Still the whole matter is a Mythus and in a mythical form, when the next step takes place, gradually no doubt; the Mythus begins to pass over into Theology. This work is brought to its culminating point by Thomas Aquinas, the Doctor Angelicus, who elaborates the subject fully in his *Summa Theologiæ*, seeking to give a semi-rational interpretation of the Mythus, making it philosophical in certain points, but leaving it still mythical at bottom. Theology is at any rate but the half-way house between mythology and philosophy.

As an instance of the method of Aquinas, we may take what he says about the presence of an angel in a given locality. This presence is not a "contact of dimensions," but is an "application of power to a certain place" (*applicatio virtutis ad aliquen locum*). Aquinas will in part rationalize the angel, will remove the literal popular conception to a distance, yet will retain the angel. An angelic appearance in Space and Time is somewhat questionable to the mind of the great theologian, so it becomes a force (*virtus*);

still for him too the angels are celestial beings arranged in Hierarchies.

Next comes Dante, a student of Aquinas, a theologian, but fundamentally a poet, and hence mythical in spirit. He takes Aquinas' work and recasts it, turning it back into the Mythus, yet curiously retaining the Theology imbedded in the same. The angelic system now assumes its place as a part of the grand order of the Paradiso.

Note then the development of this Mythus, which may be seen in four stages. (1) The stray fragments in the Old and New Testaments. (2) These fragments were organized into a system in the book ascribed to Dionysius. (3) Then the whole Mythus is theologized by Aquinas. (4) Finally Dante mythologizes this Theology, and makes the Angelic Hierarchy the Eighth Sphere of his celestial Order. In other cases of the Mythus we can observe essentially the same development.

So much for the angels; but whence came the idea of a *Primum Mobile* as their Sphere? This has been traced back to a passage of Aristotle's *De Coelo* (Cap. 9). From the same passage the conception of the Empyrean has been derived (see Philalethes, *Com. ad Par.* XXVII.). Thus the old Greek philosopher furnished the thought which has unfolded into the last two Spheres of Dante's Paradiso.

Another Heathen influence which has wrought

upon the Mythus of the Angelic Hierarchy, is Neo-Platonism, which was also a reaction toward Oriental thought. The chief cause of this Mythus, however, lay in the gradual development of the priesthood, the Hierarchy below on Earth, which is nevertheless to have its mythical reflection in Heaven. Above, too, there must be a long series of mediations between Man and God; for thus only can the individual be saved from the all-devouring Universal, which is the deity of the Orient. In this way we see that the Mythus of the angelic Hierarchy is really born of the grand struggle between Orient and Occident, and partakes of both, drawing to itself materials, philosophic and legendary, from many sources, Greek, Hebrew, Christian.

*Canto Twenty-Ninth.* This Canto continues the subject of Angels, and has to do specially with their creation. Dante gives the ground thereof thus: "In order that his (God's) splendor shining (manifesting itself) might say: I subsist." As a needful comment upon these words, a declaration from Aquinas may be added: "Nothing else moved God unto the production of his creatures but Goodness, *which he wished to communicate.*" Moreover they were created "in his eternity," outside of Time and Space. Such are the why, when and where of creation, which must be thought as outside of all limitation (*Fuor d'ogni altro comprender*). Not



to be grasped by the finite Understanding is this thought, but by the limit-transcending Reason.

Angels, according to scholastic theology, which is here set forth by Dante, are a necessity of creation, which has three forms—angels, man, nature. God is alone the pure act (*actus purus*); pure potentiality (*potentia*) holds “the lowest part;” the union of the two is the creation.

But the main fact at this point is the Fall of the angels. The grand dualism enters at once; Aquinas says that the Devil sinned at the first instant of his existence. The good angels “recognized the goodness” of their Maker; the bad were the proud who refused recognition. Thus we have Satan down in the center of the Earth at the other end of the Universe. Other questions are here discussed, for instance the intellect, memory and will of angels. These we shall pass over.

The angelic Mythos is universal, very deep it flows in the human soul and belongs to all times and peoples in some form. Christian angelology is a new working-over and transformation of Oriental ideas, and seeks to image afresh the fundamental thought of Christianity, the mediation of man with the Divine. The terrible Oriental God still ruled men’s minds; specially the Hebrew training of the Old Testament wrought with power. Man was weak, very weak, and could not come face to face with deity; hence

the divine messengers to the human, the angels, partaking of both sides.

It is said that the angelic Hierarchy is a product of Gnosticism, which was chiefly a Christian reaction toward Orientalism, maintaining the Absolute One to be above virtue and knowledge, above even good and evil. Counter to Gnosticism ran the other Christian movement which gives validity to man and emphasizes the worth of the individual. The Mythos of this conflict, running through centuries, and embracing both sides, is seen in the angelic Hierachy, still a very powerful element in the popular Christian religion.

Angels have appeared throughout the *Divine Comedy*. Black angels we saw in the *Inferno*, and Satan himself was at the center. In the *Purgatorio* an angel would always start forth at the passage from one circle to another, being "a messenger of God" to the guilty man when he had transcended his sin. In the *Paradiso* they have three separate functions: (1) they are movers of the separate Spheres; (2) they are gathered in their own distinct Sphere; (3) they are also in the Empyrean, where they fly between the petals of the White Rose and the Great Central Light, messengers still, mediating between God and Man.

The *Primum Mobile* completes the third Triad of the celestial Order, whose general char-

acteristic, as illustrated by its series of spectacular symbols, is the evanishment of the Visible into the Invisible, of the Finite into the Infinite. First is the Ladder on which spirits are mounting to the unseen in the planet Saturn, second is the triumphal procession of Christ vanishing heavenward in the sphere of the Fixed Stars, third is the brilliant Point surrounded by the nine Halos, in the Primum Mobile, which images afar the grand spectacle of the Empyrean, into which it now unfolds.

#### TOTAL HEAVEN.

Above all the other Heavens is the Total or Universal Heaven, the Empyrean; above them all it is, yet it includes them all. It is distinct from them, yet this distinction is to be all of them and itself too. One with them yet different — the difference being within the Heaven, not outside of it, against something else than itself. The three Heavens, Lower, Middle, Upper, have limits against one another, not against the Empyrean, which contains them as limited, and therein is the unlimited, infinite. But note that this infinite is not reached by destroying, but by preserving and transcending the limit. So there is a Fourth Heaven which is, however, all Heaven.

This is the last most desperate effort of Dante to set forth the Infinite by an image. Through

the entire *Paradiso* we have observed the struggle to express by the limited what is unlimited, to show by some picture what lies beyond the imagination. Still we must not forget that the thing gets itself said, and the poem leaves upon the reader the impress of the Infinite.

Hitherto there has been a rise from one Sphere to another, an external change from place to place. But the Empyrean can only change within itself, transformation is its principle, which now takes the form of a grand spectacular phantasmagoria of the Highest Heaven.

Of course Dante is present, still in the struggle, still finite, yet seeking the vision of the Divine, which gives peace. He has come to the last stage of his process, he has seen both the Spirits of the Blessed and the Angels in the lower realms; now he is to behold them in unity with God, himself included.

We can see this whole process to be a movement of the soul from the first light-point of the Divinity to the complete revelation thereof. The stages unfolded in Cantos XXX-XXXIII, are as follows:

1. "The point which conquered me" is the point around which the Angelic Hierarchies played: only a point, yet including the Universe, and, as it were, embracing God, who is not yet unfolded to Dante. Such is the starting-point.

2. The River of Light is next with its two

banks of flowers and its sparkles interplaying. Now Divinity has taken the shape of a stream, coming somewhence and going somewhither — the stream of the Providential Order we may think it for the time being.

3. The stream becomes a vast Lake of Light, circular now, that is returning into itself, or self-contained. The two banks of the stream unfold into the great White Rose with two sides or compartments, while between the flowers and the lake there is the interplay of angels coming and going, “like bees.”

4. The vast Lake of Light (or of Divinity) is finally to be seen in its details, is to be differentiated, when it will be found to contain God, the Trinity, and the Incarnation — that is, the cardinal doctrines of Christianity. Dante now beholds these as they are in truth, and the poem ends.

This fourth step is the most important. It means that the great Lake of God, the pure universal without particularity, is to be transformed, is to be given a content, and become organized. The mediator in this process is the Virgin, a mortal, but the mother of God's Son, who is the Word, the Incarnation. Her place, therefore, is the highest of all humanity; through her the universal becomes individual and a man, yet is also God.

To this final view Beatrice cannot lead Dante,

it must be somebody who can conduct him to a vision of the Virgin. This new Guide is St. Bernard, particularly noted in the Church for his devotion to the Holy Mother. Beatrice is not specially endowed with the attributes of Mary; her relation to Dante, her love for the man, transfigured though it be, is not Mariolatry. The woman does not lead her lover to another woman, for the idea of sex does not wholly drop out of Heaven.

Perhaps too we may find an historical element in this transition. These four stages are four ways of conceiving God, giving rise to four forms of religion. Especially the vast Lake of Light, which is God, suggests the Pantheistic divinity swallowing all in its vast sea. Then the differentiation of the Lake hints the movement from the Oriental religious consciousness to the Christian.

The passage to the Empyrean is different in kind from the previous transitions, being the rise to what is incorporeal, immaterial, infinite. It has not body, not motion, it lies outside of Space and Time; yet the poet has to employ all these finite relations in order to express his image. More manifest than ever is the contradiction between Form and Meaning; a veritable wrestle between Finite and Infinite is imprinted on the very words.

*Canto Thirtieth.* The poet takes a look back

at the preceding Sphere, the *Primum Mobile*, with its Angels vanishing like stars before the morning sun. Yet the Angels are to appear again in the Empyrean; they are twofold also, like the souls of the Blessed; each is in its own particular Heaven, and is also above in the Highest Heaven. In the present case the Angels "play always around that Point which conquered me," namely God, whom Dante has not yet reached, and who shows the difficult antithesis of "seeming included by that which He includes," by Space and Time, yet these He includes. Note the struggle to rise to the thought of the Universal, which is the condition of seeing God. For the present, however, Dante gives up, and turns to Beatrice.

Her beauty is now greater than ever, must be so, since she is more and more the embodiment of the Divine, as she rises toward her seat. A reflection of God into Dante's eyes she is; but he is less able to express her than before, the infinite content wrestles with its finite form, and overwhelms it; he will no longer "follow behind her beauty poetizing." Beatrice has, therefore, just about attained her complete manifestation in Art.

Still she speaks and gives the situation: "We have passed beyond the greatest body (*Primum Mobile*) to the Heaven which is pure light." We are no longer in any material body, not even

in Space, but in pure light — “intellectual light” the poet names it, being thought, idea, spirit. Such is the transition: from the local and temporal into the eternal, from the finite to the infinite world, to that portion of Paradise which is all Paradise.

Light, then, is here, but not alone; it is “full of Love,” and this love again “is full of bliss.” Not intellect alone, but heart is God’s; Light, Love and Joy are the three blessed conditions. Aristotle and Aquinas say that true felicity consists in knowing God; Plato and Scotus, in loving Him; Dante unites the two, as well he may. Such is then the definition by Beatrice of the Empyrean.

Of a sudden a vivid flash darts and dazes the poet: “this is a salutation” says the Guide; at once “I knew that I was rising above my own virtue.” More than himself he is, or more than he was just before; look what does he now see?

A River of Light sweeps into vision, sending forth “living sparks” which fly to the two banks of the stream, on which are blooming wonderful flowers. The sparks pass and repass between the stream and flowers, bearing gifts from each to each. The old Hebrew prophet Daniel saw also in vision a stream of fire, which, however, was probably infernal. Dante’s suggestion speaks out of *Revelations* (XXII. 1): “And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as



crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb." So this river of Dante's may be regarded, the stream of the Providential Order flowing down through the Ages. "Of this water it behooves thee to drink," which takes place, when a new vision appears.

The river is transformed into a circular figure of light, larger than the Sun, around which are the seats of the Blessed arranged in the form of an amphitheater, which form, however, Dante did not take, as it suggested Heathenism and the butchery of Christians. So the poet calls the whole a rose, a flower, sprung of the flowery banks of the River of Light, with its petals for seats and its center as the lake of fire.

Such is the grand spectacular metamorphosis, suggesting much. Note the transformation of the three constituent parts, the river, the sparks, the shores of flowers. The line of the stream becomes circular, thus the river is made into a shape which comes from itself and returns to itself, an image far more adequate to divinity. The two flower banks become the two sides of the Great White Rose, containing the Saints of the Old and the New Testaments. The sparks are the Angels ministrant, flying between the Lake of Light and the Rose, or between God and the souls of the Blessed. These angels are the messengers of harmony between God and Man, between the Great Light and the Great Rose —

the fragrance of the flower and the illumination of the Lake are brought together, praise and recognition on the one hand, providence and protection on the other.

Thus the River of the Ages pours into the sea of Eternity — finitude transcends itself into infinitude. The origin and end of the River is in the dark, but the Lake hints the coming from God and the return to Him.

Beatrice and Dante descend into "the yellow of the Rose," into this central light, whence they scan the seats of Blessed "more than a thousand" running around the Lake "larger than the Sun." Note that in all these descriptions Space enters and Finitude, though we are supposed to have left Space and Finitude behind. Beatrice points out the seat to be occupied by the Emperor Henry VII, Dante's ideal ruler "who will come to set Italy straight before she is ready." A great failure of the ideal on Earth, which however is here in Heaven to find its reward. The cause of the failure is avarice, and the guilty instrument is a Pope, Clement V (1305-14), who will follow Boniface VIII into the hole of the Simonists in Hell.

So Beatrice speaks and ends her guidance. She has brought Dante to the great Lake of Light, and shown him the seats of the Blessed and the work of the Angels. She has risen higher and higher with her ward, being the limit-

transcending principle, the rise out of the finite and the assertion of the infinite nature of man. She has reached Divinity, the grand Reservoir of Light, having manifested the Divine in herself all along.

But here she comes to her limit. The opposite process must take place, the Divine must descend and become incarnate, be born a man. This is not Beatrice's work, but a new guide must appear.

*Canto Thirty-First.* The main matter in the present Canto is the change of Guides, St. Bernard takes the place of Beatrice. The general form and function of the great White Rose are first given, then the new Guide appears and points out the one who is highest in it, the Virgin, who is to mediate Dante's vision of the Trinity, she being the mother of the Second Person, the divine appearance in flesh.

I. An image is employed to express the relation between the Rose with its Saints and the divine Reservoir of Light: the Angels are the bees which incessantly are flying between the flower and the hive. Three characteristics mark these angels: faces of flame, wings of gold, bodies of white, seeming to hint charity, wisdom, purity; according to some expositors the Trinity is suggested, the gold is the Father, the white is the Son, the flame is the Holy Spirit.

The inhabitants of the Rose, "the old people

and the new," kept their look and their love all on one mark, which was evidently "the Triune Light which shines in one Star," and which we shall yet find to be in the great Reservoir. The angelic bees, ministrants of the souls in the Rose, "dispense from bench to bench, peace and ardor," two opposites which yet are one, the serenity which comes from actively doing the good.

Dante had already comprehended the general form of Paradise, when he turned around to ask a question of Beatrice, but she was gone. In her place he beheld an old man who said he had been moved by Beatrice "to put an end to thy desire," which evidently she no longer could do. This Elder is St. Bernard, and he intimates at once his function when he tells Dante to look upward "till thou see the Queen (the Virgin) sitting, to whom this realm is subject and devoted." This realm of the White Rose is hers, and the poet catches a glimpse of her beauty. And "in that middle" he sees more than a thousand Angels, doing their work of ministration.

So Dante beholds Our Lady, and she is pointed out by St. Bernard, the new Guide. Beatrice takes her place in the third row from above; she has fulfilled her mission. The poet addresses to her a fervent oration, in which her character is indicated: "Thou hast drawn me to liberty from

being a slave;" truly Beatrice has been his liberation, through her he has transcended his limitations, from Hell upward; her meaning is freedom, the infinite self-liberating spirit.

Such she is in general, yet she has special forms. In the *Paradiso* she has been the expounder of Theology; but now Dante is actually to see Christ, the Incarnate Word, through the Virgin, by whom He was born into flesh. This special province is occupied by St. Bernard, with his devotion to the Virgin, "for whom I am wholly on fire with Love." Contemplation or Vision is now the supreme religious activity of the soul, not the discussion of Theology.

We must note that Dante displays his temper to the last. Terribly human he is, a very finite Dante here face to face with the Infinite. In the previous Canto the last words of Beatrice, who had freed him, was a prophetic malediction on a hated Pope; in the present Canto a savage sarcasm on Florence, one fierce diabolic gleam in the White Rose, still shows us the bitter exile though "he had come from the human to the divine, from time to the eternal." Surely not yet quite done is his discipline.

*Canto Thirty-Second.* This gives the organization of the White Rose. Two lines we must conceive to be drawn through it, one across through from the seat of the Virgin to that of John the Baptist, the other around the Rose half

way between its petals. Thus the shape of the amphitheater is doubly divided into halves; by a straight line crosswise, and by a circular line in the middle.

The Virgin Mary is the point from which the description begins, and to which it returns. She is the center of interest in this Rose of Humanity, being nearest to Godhood. But her special praise and place are to be brought out in the next Canto. Now we are to behold the lesser personages of the kingdom of Heaven.

I. The line crosswise divides the Rose into two halves, of which the left one is composed of the people of the Old Testament, while the right half contains the people of the New Testament. The seats of the first are already full, the time being past; they are the chosen ones of God who believed in the Christ to come. Eve is here, on the seat just below that of the Virgin; thus we behold together the woman "who opened and punctured the wound" and also the one "who closed and anointed it." The world-women, Eve and Mary, the mother of man fallen and of man's savior; really they are parts of the same great process — the sinful and the pure, like Helen and Iphigenia of classic legend.

Thus Hebrew story gives the two grand parts of motherhood, the source of the negative and the positive deed. In the third seat down is Rachel, and below her on the right is Beatrice over the

line among the believers who lived after Christ. From this point Beatrice went forth to rescue Dante in the Inferno.

The seats to the left of the Virgin are not yet full, they are taken by those of the New Dispensation, "the believers in Christ come." Dante seems to think that at the end of the world, both halves will be equally full. So much for the right and left sides of the Rose, or the Christian and Hebrew.

But look across the great flower over the Sea of Light, since distance is now no obstruction to vision. There we see St. John the Baptist, just opposite to the Virgin, and beneath him on successive seats Benedict, Francis, Augustine, who seem to be needed to represent the non-Hebraic element of the Church, as every other person mentioned is an Israelite.

II. Next we come to the circular division of the Rose, making an inner and outer half; the inner half is devoted to the souls of children, which are here "through no merit of their own, but through others' merit." A vast throng of little ones, apparently almost the half of Heaven; their baby faces can be seen, also their childish voices are heard over the vast sweep of seats.

At this point rises a question in Dante's mind, the question of infant salvation and damnation. On the whole St. Bernard gives here to the reader rather the most fruitless

theological discussion in the entire *Paradiso*; the most external mechanical view of human spirit comes out of his mouth just now. In the first place these infants have no desert of their own, not even that of innocence; they are saved or damned through an outside power. Then why are these distinctions, indicated by the grade of the seats, among them? Simply because it is so established above. In the next place these Jewish infants on the left hand below, how are they saved without baptism? By circumcision. But this rite only applies to the males; what is to become of the females? They are allowed to pass. Thus the theological machine is rigged up and grinds out salvation for Jewish and Christian infants, while it damns the heathen innocents. Alas! we did not expect to meet such a thought in the *White Rose of Heaven*. But let us rejoice, it is the last distinctly theological discussion; we are henceforth to have vision, which transcends all this pitiful scholastic sophistication. One would gladly think that Dante, in a spirit of subtle irony, placed this worst specimen of theology at the last, to rise out of it and leave it behind forever.

Now the poet through his Guide is brought back to a vision of the Virgin whose "face is most like to Christ," her son, and it therefore "alone can prepare thee to behold Christ." Such is her mediatorial function, which is now



borne in the form of joy by the Angels flying to the Spirits in the Rose. Nothing ever seen before "showed me such a likeness of God."

A picture of the environment of the Virgin is painted by the poet, foreshadowing much Christian Art. Above her floats the Angel Gabriel with the words *Ave Maria*, imaging the first grand announcement of the Divine-Human; then below but next to her are beheld Adam and St. Peter, "the two roots, as it were of this Rose," representatives again of the fall and the rise. Next to St. Peter is St. John the Evangelist, so important a person for this poem with its Mythos of the Apocalypse. Then on the opposite side of the Rose, over against Peter is Anna, Mother of the Holy Mother, and over against Adam is Lucia, who moved Beatrice to descend to the Inferno to save Dante when going to ruin.

But this description must be cut short somewhere, else the poem would run on to infinity. From this setting of the Virgin St. Bernard now turns to the Virgin herself.

*Canto Thirty-Third.* The general movement of the Canto is the rise to the Vision of God through the adoration of the Virgin. Herein we behold Mariolatry, which shows the place and function of Mary in the great religious process of Man's union with the Divine, as conceived by the Christian Middle Ages.

I. The prayer to the Virgin by the Saint, her

special devotee, is the first matter. She is the center of the White Rose; she is mortal but the mother of God, hence the first human mediator of the Divine for man. The Saint intercedes with her for Dante and she intercedes above.

The prayer of St. Bernard to the Virgin is a famous one, the characteristic of which is the contradictory epithets. She is "Virgin-Mother," also "the daughter of thy Son," "humblest and highest of created beings," "fixed limit of an eternal design" — in all of which we again see the struggle of finite speech to express the Infinite. Through the very contradiction of language the reader is forced to rise out of language into the unity of spirit above contradiction, which unity at last is the ineffable.

II. The inner change in Dante is hinted; he gazes upward, and soon sees by "the ray of that light *which is true of itself*." Inexpressible is what he beholds; "henceforth sight was greater than speech." Still he tells a little; the great contradiction between "substance and accident" vanishes there and becomes "a simple light," which illuminates all. "The universal form of this knot," namely the Universe, he thinks he sees, which knot, therefore, he proceeds to untie; that is he resolves the great Reservoir of Light into its distinctive elements.

For now he can gaze steadily upon the strongest light in Heaven, whose faintest reflection

formerly dazzled him to blindness. Indeed he cannot now turn away from it "for any other view," inasmuch as the "Good, which is the object of Will, is wholly collected in that light;" the Will has therein an adequate content for the first time, and "outside of it that is defective which is there perfect."

III. So Dante continues to look, and under his completed vision he beholds the final transformation of Paradiso. What he now sees unfolding out of the pure Light, is, first, the Trinity, to which he seeks give expression in two ways, by a poetic image (the three circles) and by a scholastic formula. But he has to sigh: "O how short (of Truth) is the saying of it!"

The Paradiso has been mainly one long struggle to grasp the Trinity; the Theologians in the Sun began with it, but the poet has to transcend the theological statement, which manifestly does not satisfy him. Now he has reached it by pure vision, but it cannot be uttered.

Yet another transformation out of the "second circle" of the Trinity and the scene closes. "Within itself, of its own color, it (the second circle) seemed to me to be painted with our effigy," namely the human; now the poet beholds the Incarnation, the Divine-Human in the Second Person of the Trinity.

Herewith comes the end; immediate intuition has transcended theological reasoning; the

Love which moves the Universe, also "turned my desire and will;" and all transpired "in a flash." Moreover speech ceases; "power failed here my lofty fantasy," and the poem must stop, when the unutterable is reached. It is noteworthy that Goethe's *Faust* attains the same point at its conclusion.